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ABSTRACT

This kit of materials, designed for trainers of adult literacy teachers, attempts to capture the experience of five adult literacy workers from Mozambique on a study tour of Nicaragua and Brazil, and to introduce the user to the concept, methodology, and tools of "popular literacy." The kit both reports an experience and offers a set of resources, but is not intended as a teacher training curriculum. The materials consist of a users' guide, background documents, activities and tools for popular literacy workers, and information on available resources. The background documents include articles on southern-hemisphere educational exchanges as an approach to staff training, an address to adult educators about popular education in Latin America, and education and the struggle for popular power in Mozambique. Nine activities and tools for classroom use are contained in the kit, including games, role-plays, a sociodrama, a text, a comic book, methodological guides, and descriptions of participatory techniques. The resource section contains documentation on popular education methodology and experiences, and a list of groups contacted during the exchange program. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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Training for Empowerment

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...ATERIALS FOR POPULAR ...ORKERS BASED ON AN ...GE AMONG EDUCATORS ...OZAMBIQUE, NICARAGUA AND BRAZIL

by
Judith Marshall
with
Domingos Chigarire, Helena Francisco
Antonio Gonçalves and Leonardo Nhantumbo

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I used to think that when I taught ordinary people I was doing popular education because we were making education accessible to people at the base.

Here I've seen that popular education isn't exactly this. It's more a question of people becoming conscious of their power in a particular moment of history. I see that it isn't something done just in schools - with desks and students - as I thought. Literacy is just part of a larger process of popular education.

I also know that popular education is not separate from a historical process. It has to be linked with the history, economy and culture of a particular society.

Domingos Chigarire
Mozambican literacy trainer

1. Introduction

This kit of materials on "Training for Empowerment" grew out of a South-South exchange programme that took five adult educators from Mozambique to Nicaragua and Brazil on a four-month study visit at the end of 1985. After two months in Nicaragua and six weeks in Brazil, the group participated in the World Assembly of Adult Education in Argentina. The kit attempts to capture the experience of the actual study visit that took a group of literacy workers from Africa on an extended dialogue with their counterparts in Latin America, and at the same time to introduce the user to the broader conception, methodology and tools of "popular education."

The four Mozambican educators on the South-South exchange were part of a team of trainers for a pilot project to train trainers. Exposure to the experiences of popular literacy in Nicaragua and Brazil was seen as an important part of the preparation of the staff team, a way to broaden their perspectives and knowledge of approaches to literacy throughout the world and to give them an opportunity to exchange their experiences with others.

All four Mozambican literacy workers were middle-level staff, whose day-to-day work was the organization of hands-on training events. Leonardo Nhantumbo worked in the training department of the national office, which had responsibility for designing the new approach to training. Antonio Goncalves and Domingos Chigarire had worked for many years as trainers in Sofala province, linked to the provincial training centre at Manga where the pilot project was to be housed. They had been involved in both pre-service and in-service training for the provincial and district level literacy staff. Helena Francisco had done similar work in training at provincial level in Inhambane province.

Judith Marshall, a Canadian adult educator, was asked to join the trip in a coordinator and facilitator role. She had worked from 1978 to 1984 in the Ministry of Education in Mozambique, both in international cooperation and in the training department of the National Directorate of Adult Education. At the time of the trip, she was involved in research in a factory-based literacy programme at Matola Industrial Company in Maputo. She therefore had first-hand knowledge of literacy in Mozambique. From travel and contacts with Latin American popular educators and collaboration with the International Council for Adult Education over the years, she also had knowledge of the Nicaraguan and Brazilian realities. Her task was to facilitate the experience, contributing towards making sense of what was being seen in its own context and at the same time, working to extrapolate what could be useful in Mozambique.

The trip was jointly organized by the National Directorate of Adult Education, Mozambique, the Directorate of Adult Education, Nicaragua, the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and the Latin American Council for Adult Education (CEAAL). The financing for the trip came from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), and from the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE).

Rather than writing a report on the trip in a conventional form, we decided to write the report as a kit of training materials. Judith Marshall's subsequent visits to Mozambique gave us the opportunity to discuss the trip and to work out a selection of experiences to be included.

The kit highlights some of the most interesting approaches and tools for training that we encountered. While it focusses on training for literacy, literacy should not be understood narrowly as simply skills of reading and writing and counting. What we mean by literacy is "popular literacy" which is an integral part of what, in Latin America, is referred to as "popular education." Some of the dimensions of "popular education" should become clearer in the course of using the materials of this kit.

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2. Who is the Kit For?

- Mozambican literacy workers
- Mozambican trainers working in cooperatives, unions, women's groups, extensions programmes and community education
- popular literacy workers in other parts of the "South"
- popular literacy workers in Canada and other parts of the "North"

The kit was intended primarily for trainers of trainers and trainers of literacy workers. It was written with Mozambican literacy staff trainers in mind. These trainers train district level trainers and design pre-service training for popular literacy teachers.

It is by no means limited, however, to those doing training for literacy programmes. It is equally relevant to those doing training programmes for community education, in cooperatives and trade unions, with women's groups and refugees, or anywhere that the goal is a process of participation from the bottom up.

While it was written with Mozambican realities as the central focus, the kit has interest and relevance for popular educators in other parts of the world, both in the North and in the South. It demonstrates the usefulness of South-South Exchanges as a way of training trainers and offers a set of activities and tools useful for training popular education workers anywhere.

3. What the Kit Is - and Is Not

The kit is a report of an experience, a particularly rich South-South exchange that allowed an extended four-

month "conversation" among four Mozambican adult educators, their Canadian facilitator and a host of Nicaraguan and Brazilian counterparts working in popular education.

The kit is designed as a set of resources. It is meant to stimulate thinking about approaches to literacy and to training literacy workers. It also provides suggestions of specific teaching activities and tools that can be adapted for a variety of situations.

The kit is not intended as a "workshop outline," to be followed activity by activity. It is assumed that the users will pick and choose, adapting ideas relevant to their own situations.

4. What the Kit Contains

The kit consists of four sections:

User's Guide
Background Documents
Activities/Tools for Popular Literacy Workers
Resources

Three background documents are included:

Gracias Nicaragua! Obrigado Brasil!
South-South Exchanges as an Approach to Staff Training

Popular Education in Latin America
The Word and the Silence
Address by Francisco Vio Grossi, Secretary General of CEAAL, to Adult Educators in Africa
Popular Education: Concept and Implications

Education in Mozambique
Education and the struggle for "people's power"

The first background document gives an account of the trip itself, what we did in Nicaragua and Brazil, our reactions, how we used the experience when we got back. It also reflects on the South-South exchange as an approach to training literacy staff.

The second background document has two parts. The first is an address given by Francisco Vio Grossi of the Latin American Council for Adult Education (CEAAL) to African adult educators at a meeting of the African Association for Literacy and Adult Education, AALAE, in Nairobi, Kenya in August 1987. It poses the role of the popular educator, caught in the tension between forces that silence the oppressed and the empowerment that comes from naming one's own reality. The second is a document reflecting on popular education as a concept and a practice in Latin America, also by Francisco Vio Grossi.

The third background document gives a brief overview of education in Mozambique, sketching out education under colonialism, the new forms of education and people's power emerging during the liberation struggle and post-independence efforts to consolidate and develop education for all Mozambicans and build "people's power."

The main section of the kit consists of nine activities and tools for popular literacy workers. These include:

1. Knowledge: What Is It? Who Has It? How Did They Get It? Why?
A game based on discussions with the VEREDA Group in Sao Paulo, Brazil

2. Generative Words - Words Leading to Social Change
A sociodrama from a training workshop organized by CEPIS in Sao Paulo

3. Teacher? Educator? Animator? Facilitator? Coordinator?
Role plays and a game linked to a conversation with Nova in Rio de Janeiro

4. Education, Knowledge and School Systems
A study document, *Danger! School* from Brazil

5. Education: Transmission or Creation of Knowledge?
Role plays on "transmitting" and "creating" knowledge

6. Education as Learning to Ask the Right Questions
A comic book from Nicaragua to stimulate critical consciousness

7. Creating a Collective Memory
Methodological march and a workshop planning guide from Nicaragua as ways to "Think process!"

8. Looking for the Problematic Points in our Literacy Work
A methodology of internal evaluation from Nicaragua

9. From Lifeboats to Secret Admirers
Participatory techniques from Nicaragua to energize group work

Each of the nine activities or tools includes a vignette of a Nicaraguan or Brazilian group that we met, the context in which we found them using the particular activity or tool and a brief description of its theoretical significance. There is a list of the materials needed and a description of the steps to take in using the activity or tool in a workshop.

The resource section has two items:

1. Documentation on Popular Education Methodology and Experiences
2. Groups Contacted During the South-South Exchange

The bibliography gives suggestions for further reading both about popular education as a methodology and the experiences of popular education at work. The list of groups

contacted is by no means exhaustive, but gives an idea of the dimensions of the popular education movement in Nicaragua and Brazil.

5. Thank you! Gracias! Obrigado!

An experience as rich as this South-South exchange depended on the candour and generosity of many people along the way. In Nicaragua, the Ministry of Education opened its doors to us. Nicaraguan educators drew us into their lives, politically, professionally and personally. They welcomed us into tough discussions on popular education and how a popular state can provide educational services for its people while at the same time encourage them to define and organize their own programmes of education. The context of war, "education in poverty" and the uneven path of building institutions of "people's power" made us feel immediately at home. To the Minister of Education, Fernando Cardenal and his national staff, to educators in the various regions including Matagalpa, Leon and Granada, to our driver and to the learners and popular educators in the Popular Education Collectives, we owe an enormous debt of gratitude.

Others outside the Ministry of Education also contributed generously to making the visit successful. Popular educators such as Anabel Torres of CEPA, Oscar Jara of Alforja and Rosa Maria Torres of INIES all gave generously of their time and insights.

In Brazil, we found ourselves welcomed into an incredible diversity of experiences with popular educators linked to CEAAL (Latin American Council for Adult Education) in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Recife as our guides. New spaces were opening up after the many years of repression in which popular education activities had been carried out underground. Some of the most poignant moments were those in which our Brazilian hosts revealed their own amazement at what was now possible. Our special thanks go the CEPIS team in Sao Paulo and the IBASE team in Rio and to Joao Francisco de Souza and Marcos Arruda whom we met at various points in our travels in the three countries, picking up effortlessly the theme of our last conversation.

We appreciate the role of Budd Hall and Yusuf Kassam of the International Council for Adult Education in sharing their vision of the importance of South-South exchanges for building up an international adult education movement. ICAE's willingness to facilitate the contacts in Latin America, its invitation to the World Assembly of Adult Education in Argentina, and its financial contribution to Judith Marshall's travel costs were all important contributions.

Special gratitude is owed to the National Directorate of Adult Education in Mozambique for embarking on the venture with little knowledge of the outcomes and for creating a space through the Manga Staff Training Centre in which the rich experiences of the South-South exchange could be shared more broadly.

"Popular education" a new form of education for adults

Popular education proposes a critical pedagogy distinct from that of official schooling. It is a pedagogy that takes as its starting point a commitment to the grassroots sectors and the need for an approach to education that works effectively for the needs and aspirations of the poor and marginal. It supports both the organizational needs of grassroots movements and their search for identity, insisting on their right to name themselves, and define their own forms of struggle, rather than accepting the categorizations and space for action defined for them from above.

"Popular education" is a form of critical pedagogy that accompanies a process of self-discovery, when people discover their own capacity to challenge collectively the forces that oppress them, and to transform their own reality, starting from their own interests and constructing their own alternatives.

The "popular educator" has the challenge of strengthening new attitudes and behaviour patterns based on the values of participation, solidarity and autonomy. Teaching becomes a process of sharing knowledge and experience.

Another warm thank you is due to the Swedish International Development Authority, SIDA. SIDA's input was not only the financial support that made the trip possible but, through consultants and staff in the Maputo SIDA office, a keen interest in the trip as a programme strategy.

Production of the kit benefited greatly from the inputs of popular educators in Canada. Bev Burke and Rick Arnold read early drafts and offered a host of practical suggestions. Margie Bruun-Meyer enhanced the kit enormously with her work on layout and design.

Thanks are also due to the Canadian Commission for Unesco (UCAP programme), National Literacy Secretariat, Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, World Literacy of Canada and CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) for financing the production of the kit.

To all those named, and to many others unnamed, we acknowledge our gratitude. It is hard to know how to convey thanks for such an extraordinarily rich experience. What comes to mind is a conversation that took place in a cooperative in Cebaco in Nicaragua. We had visited the literacy class and Mario, the cooperative secretary, had explained how their Popular Education Centre operated. He mentioned Daniel, a student from a nearby high school who came each day to work with them as a popular educator. One of us asked Mario whether the cooperative gave anything to Daniel for volunteering his time. Mario paused for what seemed like ages, thought deeply about the question and then with a broad grin, replied. "Yes, we learn."

In the end "learning" is perhaps the best way we can say thank you for the South-South exchange.

GRACIAS, NICARAGUA! OBRIGADO, BRASIL!

South-South Exchanges as an Approach to Staff Training

Tom Balke

"I've known them since 1982. When they got back from their trip to Nicaragua and Brazil, they weren't the same people. They'd seen a different life, another way to do adult education. They brought nice things back with them - that's true. But best of all, they brought back a determination to pass on all their new ideas and insights to those of us who'd stayed behind."

Provincial literacy instructor
Manga Staff Training Centre
Beira, Mozambique

Origins of the South-South Exchange

In 1985, the National Directorate of Adult Education in Mozambique decided to embark on a new approach to staff training for literacy and adult education. The first question, however, was how to train the trainers! Exposure to other ways of doing literacy was one strategy. From this came a plan to send a group of Mozambicans to Nicaragua and Brazil, where rich experiences of popular education and theoretical reflection about these experiences were to be found. Another group went on a shorter visit to Guinea-Bissau and Portugal. In each of the trips, a staff person from the national office accompanied the group, playing a support and coordination role in addition to facilitating reflections on the experience.

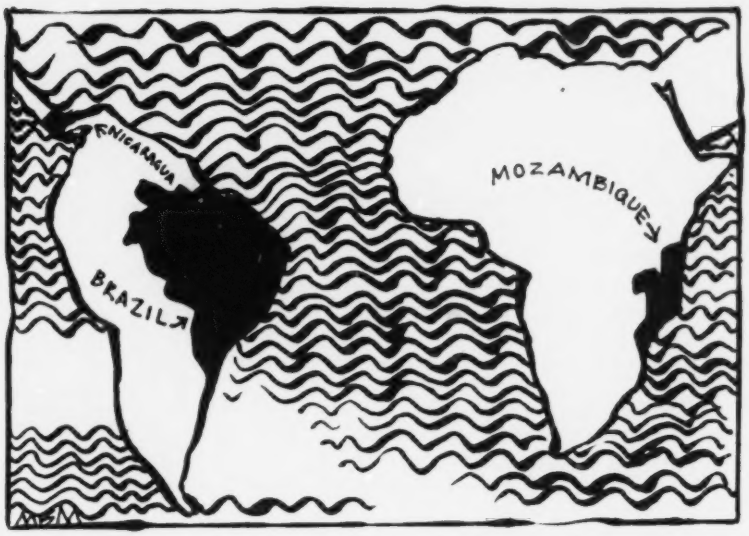
Four instructors working in training and pedagogical support programmes, three of them at provincial level, were chosen for the Latin America trip. There were three men and a woman, from 25 to 29 years of age, with seven to nine years of formal schooling, three to five years of teacher training and three to eight years of work experience in the adult education department. I accompanied the group to Latin America.

None of the four Mozambicans had travelled outside of Mozambique before setting off on their journey of discovery. The plan was to spend two months in Nicaragua in a programme organized by the Ministry of Education of Nicaragua, and six weeks in Brazil in a programme organized by CEAAL, the Adult Education Council for Latin America. The visits culminated with participation in the World Assembly of Adult Education in Argentina.

The four months of group travel and exchanges of experience with popular educators in Latin America were very intensive. They included the fundamental questioning that occurs on anyone's first trip to another culture. With it comes the revelation that "how it's done," be it dancing and eating, family life, expressing emotions or organization of a government department, is something historically and socially created rather than the natural order of things.

In Nicaragua, there was the instant identification with another struggle for survival. As in Mozambique, the dream of creating a different kind of society and the first steps in establishing "people's power" were pitted against a combination of externally backed insurgents spreading terror throughout the countryside, massive economic destabilization, natural disasters and constant disinformation campaigns. As in Mozambique, unarmed village literacy teachers and health workers were under regular attack by the insurgents.

There were moments of self-recognition. The Nicaraguans asked if Mozambicans had to work against "machismo," identifying it as a key struggle in Nicaragua and throughout Latin America. Once the meaning of "machismo" as a term was explained, the Mozambicans readily admitted that this was a struggle in Mozambique too. And indeed an important part of the dynamic during the trip both within the group itself and in interactions with Nicaraguan and Brazilian counterparts had to do with questions of gender - and how questions of silencing and empowerment played themselves out in a different way for women than men.



There were the painful moments of finding racism in other parts of the world. "Why is it that black people are always at the bottom of the heap?" was the plaintive question one day. In Nicaragua, officials spoke of current efforts to redress the historical neglect, and their own delayed recognition of the needs and aspirations of the black population of the Atlantic coast region of Nicaragua. The programme in Brazil included contacts with black consciousness groups. Behind the image of Brazil projected to Africa of soccer giant Pele or samba star Milton Nascimento lay the realities of Brazil as experienced by ordinary black people. The black consciousness groups described the racism that exists throughout Brazil, giving shocking figures of 60 per cent illiteracy rates in predominantly black areas as compared to only 10 to 12 per cent in the highly industrialized south with its predominance of settlers from Italy, Germany and Japan. The groups gave moving accounts of their efforts to reconstruct their own historical and cultural roots and were fascinated by the chance to meet people from the part of Africa from where many Brazilians had come as slaves.

The trip created a space and a legitimation for questioning that was very novel for the Mozambican educators. Coming out of a phase of top-down methods with superiors always ready to supply "the answer," the four Mozambicans were suddenly confronted with a world turning more on questions than on answers. The contacts with Nicaraguan and Brazilian educators brought a lot of opportunity for reactions to what they had seen or been told in the form of questions. In turn, there were endless questions posed to them about Mozambique. Each day's visits, each drive from one place to the next, each meal offered by a host group blended into an extended conversation about literacy, and life. The curiosity of the Mozambican visitors, their questions, their ideas, were suddenly on centre stage.

This was a very moving experience for the Mozambicans. After a long session in Nicaragua with the regional staff in Matagalpa, comparing the kinds of decision-making and definition of programmes undertaken by regional staff there with what staff at comparable level were doing in Mozambique, one of the Mozambicans made this comment:

> I have the feeling at home that the education programmes don't come from me. My role is just to carry out what comes from above. My ideas and initiatives can only be put into practice after discussion higher up. People like me take their ideas home to dream about because they know that their ideas can be taken up only after a very slow process of authorization from above.

During the trip, the Mozambicans had to make presentations on Mozambique's experience of literacy, something junior staff members like these ones had rarely been called upon to do. The first presentation was brief and mainly descriptive. Over the four months of the visit, a much richer and more detailed analysis began to emerge. The constant questioning helped their critical insights. The questions came from fellow practitioners in the field who knew all too well the difficulties in sustaining literacy programmes. In some important ways, the trip allowed the Mozambican literacy trainers to theorize their own practice for the first time. It also resulted in an impressive growth in their sense of professional identity and their sense of belonging to a world-wide movement committed to ending illiteracy.

Struggling for the right questions was part of discovering that literacy was a problematic undertaking in any context, one without easy answers or "correct" solutions. It was a special moment of questioning in Nicaragua as the Nicaraguans carried out an in-depth analysis of their own experiences of five years of popular education. Their conclusion that they had succumbed to a tendency towards formalism and overly vertical structures, and their searching discussions about the way these tendencies had permeated everything from curriculum materials to pedagogical support provided a new critical framework. This new way of posing the problem offered many insights about Mozambique as well.

LEONARDO "The trip was really worthwhile. Now I feel I have a more or less adequate vision for approaching the future. In another exchange it would be interesting to go deeper, integrating the participants into a specific area of work, a bit like an internship."

"When we came back from Brazil, we proposed a different way of relating. We arrived with a proposal to relate as colleagues without hierarchies and formalities"

"I'm hearing a lot of things for the first time here in Nicaragua. One workshop included discussions about the Nicaraguan strategies to counter economic destabilization and the current kinds of political work to counter demoralization and war weariness. I never had any idea of the links between such things as party, mass organizations, economy. We were integrated into things but weren't treated like staff members who needed to have a vision of the broader political process and the current strategies for political mobilization."

Nicaragua's discussions pointed to the need to recast radically the role of the state vis a vis education. Education Minister Fernando Cardenal challenged education officials to think through ways for state education bodies to decentralize dramatically. Could the national staff encourage a diversity of locally controlled education programmes for which they would provide coordination and support rather than set national programmes with central supervision and evaluation? Easier said than done. And what about exams? And standards? And equivalencies?

This kind of discussion provided a good bridge to Brazil, where more often than not, the local expressions of popular education got little state support. Indeed the many years under repressive regimes had resulted in a flowering of creativity, educators finding spaces through other structures, often through the church, to develop approaches to education more immediately relevant to the lives of the popular sectors.

A project of building "people's power" takes on different dimensions depending on the degree to which those holding state power are committed to genuine popular participation. Both Nicaragua and Mozambique, however, provide examples of the real difficulties even for a "popular state" to find effective forms and institutions to support and encourage popular education. The tendencies to standardize and formalize are strong, and often reassert themselves when faced with a multiplicity of local expressions of "people's power." Old habits of thinking, old understandings of "expertise," old notions of what constitutes genuine knowledge and what institutional forms best certify it are hard to leave behind.

Being part of the Mozambican delegation to the World Assembly of Adult Education in Argentina made a very special ending to the trip. For one thing, many of the new friends made during the months in Nicaragua and Brazil were fellow participants in Argentina. Also the Latin American hosts were determined to use as much popular education methodology as possible even in such a large gathering. This made it possible for the four Mozambican trainees to participate in different workshops according to interests identified during the trip, such as labour education and participatory research. The votes of thanks expressed at the end of the World Assembly included a special thanks from the Mozambican team to the many "companheiros" whose lives had touched theirs during their four months in Latin America.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT 1

In red T-shirts from the Mozambique literacy campaign saying "Let's end illiteracy," the Mozambican delegation hoisted placards voicing their thanks in both Spanish and Portuguese.

Return to Mozambique

The discussions at the end of the trip included a note of apprehension. Would it be possible for the group to put their new ideas into practice when they returned? Could their convictions about the need to combat hierarchies, to create an ambience for trainer-trainee as friends and colleagues involved in joint problem solving be realized? Happily the answer turned out to be yes!

The Latin American foursome joined up with another group that had made a visit to Guinea Bissau and Portugal, and a third group that had stayed at home thinking through new approaches to training. These eighteen literacy workers formed the core group which converged on the newly renovated and expanded centre at Manga in central Mozambique in February 1986. There they embarked on a workshop process out of which came radically different guidelines for both methodology and contents for the training programmes. Three new courses were planned: a 45-day course for voluntary literacy teachers, a ten-month course for people with six years of primary education to teach post-literacy or to staff district or provincial adult education offices, and a two-month course for district and provincial technical staff.

During the rest of 1986, groups of trainees were brought together to do each of the three courses. The two-month course for technical staff included provincial level training centre directors, on the assumption that some resistance could be expected from them if they were not drawn into the process at an early stage.

GONÇALVES "This year (1987) the training staff is working well together. Last year there were problems we discovered that it goes better when people are made responsible for their own areas. I can go in as head of pedagogy with ready-made programmes for people to carry out - but I discovered that when you do that, they don't feel any ownership over the programmes. It is better to go in with a proposal and put a team to work collectively on it. This gives them space to be creative."

The courses were characterized by a dramatic reversal in which the trainees' work experiences, the day-to-day problems of literacy in the districts were central, rather than the trainers' pre-set notions of what the trainees needed to know. The courses began with activities focussed on working in groups, looking at styles of group leadership, how adults learn, and what constitutes adult education. Instead of endless lectures, there were role plays, sociodramas, problem-solving exercises and games. A substantial amount of time was devoted first to observation and later practice teaching in nearby literacy centres.

There was constant questioning of vertical structures and authority figures, whether in teacher-student relations, trainer-trainee relations or supervisor-subordinate relations. To the question posed one day of whether a district instructor should give a model lessons when visiting a literacy centre, Antonio Goncalves, who had become the head of pedagogy at the centre, mused:

> It's an interesting question. It poses the whole dilemma of the role of the instructor. The instructor tends to be seen as the authority, the one who knows how to do it, the one with the answer. We have to discover how the instructor can interact with the adult education teachers in a way that has the teachers themselves sharing in coming to the solution.

During 1986-87, the training team at Manga showed a new critical capacity, looking hard at their own work, making frequent changes. They were visibly enjoying their new autonomy, feeling productive and self-confident, and actively seeking links with other educators in the region and in other countries. Gone was much of the passivity of the old days, when they simply executed programmes defined by the national office.

In 1987, sub-commissions were formed in each of the seven provinces that had sent trainees to Manga during 1986. The new approach to training created a lot of positive energy. The trainees were encouraged by the interest in their real day-to-day problems. The trainers were stimulated by the opportunity not to execute other people's programmes but to "work out", "try out" and often, after thinking it over, also "throw out" their own ideas. The sense of autonomy and ownership was a strong, new energizing factors.

Why did it work?

South-South exchanges are not automatically good experiences. What factors made this one work? Certainly a central one was the interaction with people in both Nicaragua and Brazil who were committed to and immersed in rich experiences of popular education. The Nicaraguan educators took up the request to play a role in a training programme for Mozambican educators very seriously, making every aspect of their experience accessible to us. The programme of activities included visits to several regions and time to observe and interact with people working at every level from classes in remote Popular Education Collectives reached by tractor and bush trail to planning and evaluation sessions with national level directors.

The programme in Brazil organized by CEPIS in São Paulo, IBASE in Rio de Janeiro and João Francisco de Sousa, coordinator of the CEAAL participatory research network, in Recife contained that same combination of dedicated people, giving us access to experiences and to their own best wisdom in reflecting on their experiences.

Another factor was the choice of literacy experiences. The Nicaraguan process, while it has important differences from the process in Mozambique, has many more points of similarity. Brazil was very different, but in the end, the micro processes of building up people's power, whatever the stance of the state, have important similarities. In Brazil, too, there was much of immediate relevance to the Mozambican experience.

Regular time for reflection during the visit was recognized from the outset as important. This didn't always work out in practice. The tendency of our hosts to pack too much into the programme and for us to accept offers to visit yet one more interesting place often crowded out time for us to de-brief, write up our observations and analyze together. There were moments of information overload, times when one simply felt like a piece of baggage being transferred on yet another mode of transport to yet another unknown destination.

Tom Balke

HELENA "I never imagined that I could travel outside of my country through literacy. I never imagined that outside of Mozambique, they talked about literacy. I didn't really understand that literacy existed at a world level. When all is said and done, it's a common struggle for all of us. I learned through the way we discussed things, the way we worked, the way we arrived at conclusions. It was all new to me."

My own role was as a catalyst, facilitating a process of reflection to allow each experience to be better understood in its own terms, and at the same time pull out implications for work in Mozambique. I also played support and coordination roles, all of which were important in consolidating the multiples levels of learning going on throughout the trip. In addition to reflection along the way, we used the final week in Recife for reflection and evaluation with João Francisco de Sousa playing a facilitating role.

The length of time, four months, was important. It made for very complex group life and interaction, with lots of moments of tension, but a lot of learning. The culture shock of being outside of Mozambique for the first time was intense for the four Mozambicans. Everything was novel, from tortillas and Sao Paulo pollution to escalators and Nicaraguan and Brazilian irreverence to authority. The group members were constantly forced to challenge their own presuppositions and to ask harder questions. It was by no means a comfortable or relaxing four months. Something so intense compressed into less time would not have gone as deep.

Funding both for the four-month South-South exchange and for equipping the pilot centre at Manga was vitally important. The refurbished buildings, bus for field-work and new teaching equipment all contributed to a sense that something important was happening in literacy. The funding was provided by SIDA (Swedish International Development Authority), as part of its ongoing programme of support to adult education.

There were several important factors that made it possible for the group to use their new insights and energies on their return to Mozambique. One was the group process with the rest of the Manga training team that allowed the new insights and methodologies to be shared. Another was the strong support for

the pilot project from the National Director along with an important degree of autonomy for it. The national staff coordinator assigned to the project made regular visits to Manga and was indefatigable in her efforts to support the new initiatives. Much improved working conditions within the newly refurbished training centre, including a vehicle, teaching materials, equipment including a video and documentation on popular education all contributed as well.

The team's anxieties during the final days in Brazil about how to transmit their experience to their Mozambican colleagues were revealing. They were convinced that they wanted to make radical changes in the way training was being done. But no one was quite sure how - and indeed whether "mere provincial instructors" would be given a voice. Helena and Chigarire were thinking it through in terms of the process. Helena posed the problem. "If we arrive as people from the outside and just inform, we're going to move ahead without hearing the ideas of people there. We can't arrive there as people who come with all the answers." To which Chigarire replied: "We have to find a way to build on the knowledge there in Mozambique, to get our cadres, those who are there, to voice their experiences first."

The testimony of Manga colleagues two years later confirms that they did find a way forward. One of the other instructors who had watched them go and come back said:

> Our colleagues brought back a new style of thinking about adult education - and much beyond. I've known them since 1981. When they came back, they were different people.

Equally dramatic were the accolades from a senior staff member who attended a course to introduce directors and senior staff to the "new methodology" and saw the impact of the Manga project in her own province.

> There's a lot of movement going on in this project. Before, there was no respect for literacy, but this project has succeeded in creating interest. . . . The big success was curriculum for the training programmes. The instructors themselves were able to plan these programmes. The methods are flexible. Things are always changing. People are stimulated to improve their own work plans. These gymnastics of developing the training curriculum allow people to develop. People have become dynamic through this project.
>
> The project makes a person work. It puts demands on your head, your initiatives, in an on-going process of planning, implementation and evaluation. The value of the knowledge people bring is recognized. Nobody is stupid.
>
> The way we used to work was monotonous and boring. People were flabby, with no creativity. When the people returned from the Manga course to Llanguene centre here in Maputo, things changed. Maria Bona, the woman who had attended, came back transformed. She worked tirelessly, she agitated, she brought us together.

CHIGARIRE "Here I saw another style of relations between educator and educatee, between junior staff members and those at the top. I saw that these relations were key to determining a process. I have been in a vertical situation and didn't see any way out of it. I thought that's how it was and how it would always be. Now I've seen something different and I am returning, determined to fight for change.

I think this kind of visit is very important. Many of our literacy teachers don't know that there are illiterate people in other countries. It really gives them encouragement. When I return, I'm going to put a lot of energy into my work because I know I'm not alone in this struggle."

Since 1987, the tensions between old and new ways of approaching literacy have increased. A new stress on professional categories resulted in many literacy workers, including those in the core group, having to enrol in teacher training courses. The courses available were for primary school teachers and tended to be given in exactly the formal and vertical style that Manga had worked so hard to dismantle. Yet despite these setbacks and the continued difficulties of war and economic destabilization in Mozambique, many of the literacy workers who were part of the Manga experience have been profoundly changed by it and continue to find ways to put their new convictions and insights into practice.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT 2

POPULAR EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA

Reflections by Francisco Vio Grossi, Secretary General, CEAAL (Latin American Council for Adult Education)

The Word and the Silence

Address to the First General Assembly of AALAE (African Association for Literacy and Adult Education), in Nairobi, Kenya, August 1987

I have come a long way to bring greetings of solidarity and affection to the adult education movement in Africa, to our sister organization AALAE, its leaders, and to my friend and "compañero", Paul Wangoola. My greetings come from the Latin American Council for Adult Education, CEAAL, from its President, Paulo Freire, from our member organizations and from adult educators throughout Latin America.

Popular Education has developed strongly amongst the oppressed of Latin America. It has emerged, anchored in the experiences of the poor. It uses people's knowledge and disseminates it. It recognizes the value of people's daily life experiences and opens up spaces for real participation. It promotes solidarity and cooperation, which are the bases for popular organization. Thousands of popular education groups exist at present in Latin America.

Popular educators are unusual people. We spend our lives in farming communities, urban shanty towns and tiny settlements. We live close to the oppressed, working with people so that they recognize and mobilize their own skills, overcome the passivity caused by alienation, misery and exploitation. We work to construct power at the base, supporting processes through which people's organizations begin to take control of their own lives. Basically we see ourselves as promoters of a process to deepen democracy amd construct a more humane society, one in which there is more justice and solidarity.

I have been asked to talk about Popular Education and "energizing," a theme full of emotion and complexity, but also a cause for hope. In the final analysis, Popular Education forces us to end our situations of domination, to mobilize ourselves and to rid ourselves finally from the external and internal dictatorships which have stained our daily lives and actions with blood.

To speak of energization and empowerment is to speak about Popular Education in all its complexity. I want to start, however, with what we as popular educators should consider essential for beginning this process of accumulating energy and developing our own strengths for social transformation. I am referring to recovering the right to speak our own words. This implies working the tension between words and silence, between talking and remaining quiet, between speaking and listening.

Our people understand the word expropriation. Their land, their rights, their work have been taken away from them. These expropriations always culminate in expropriation of the meaning of their words. What they experience as capitalist disorder is called order; what they live as institutionalized violence is called peace. There is an attempt to have what is common sense in the world of the dominant accepted by the popular sectors as their reality. The abnormal is supposed to be accepted by them as normal.

As a consequence, one of our tasks is recovering the meaning of our words. We have to work the tensions between the educator's words and the educatee's silence, between the educatee's words and the educator's silence. If we are not mindful, we may contribute towards plunging the popular groups with which we work into a deep and permanent silence.

On the other hand, if we are able to live the word and the silence fully, we will become subjects in a transforming process of speech and action. We will start recovering the sense of both our own and our people's lives.

I would like to give an example of one of our experiences in my country, Chile. In a rainy city where there is still popular resistance from ethnic minorities called "huilliches," a CEAAL educator called Cristina works with a group of women. These women are marginalized because of their positions in terms of class, gender and race. When Cristina got there, she was received by women who had been plunged into complete dumbness, an even deeper form of silence. The method she used to face this challenge was to share this silence through concrete action. They worked the land together.

After a long time, the women started to speak about themselves, their problems, their hopes. The women came to discover that in this way they were giving back words to thousands of men and women who, since birth, had lived in a society which had taken their words away from them.

They came to understand the need to question, including self-questioning, as part of being human. There are neither stupid questions nor definitive answers, as Paulo Freire has said. There is no education based on words that is not also based on silence.

In this task we face enormous obstacles. Historically, the capitalist production model has imposed a dehumanized culture, based on things. This penetrates all aspects of human life. The capitalist system works to distance people from the world that surrounds them; school inhibits enjoyment and respect for questions; the mass media abuses words and robs us of silence. Thus capitalist domination seems finally to have been consolidated. People start assuming exploitation as a normal thing.

This authoritarianism also penetrates the interior of our own social movements, our family tables and each one of our attitudes. Men and women, groups, organizations, start to repeat speeches already given, repeat worn-out words. The capacity to observe, the possibility of human communication, a genuine use of words and silence, are ruled out.

I would like to invite each one of you at this meeting to try in each intervention to live the tension between words and silence. To seek a balance between speaking and remaining silent. To speak our words and listen to those of other "compañeros," but, above all, to listen to the words of the people of Africa, in each country, in each village, and what they demand from us, the Popular Educators.

Gathered here, let us advance with new steps towards a movement of Popular Educators which broadens our activities in Latin America, Asia and Africa. In this way, we will begin to see ourselves deeply rooted in the lives of our people. Starting from our practice, we can begin to establish a new social order which grows and expands from the grassroots, from simple people, from the oppressed.

To recover the word and to live the silence implies a social order which respects the capacity of each man and each woman to control his or her own life. Creating social conditions for this to occur is called social transformation. This is our final task as Popular Educators - to humanize the earth struggling for a better society.

I want to finish by recalling the words of the Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, a Nobel prize winner in literature, who died a few days after the President of my country, Salvador Allende, was murdered. He said:

Let me also speak with your silence
clear as a lamp
simple as a ring.

Gracias
Thank you
Asante Sana
Merci beaucoup
Muito obrigado

Popular Education: Concept and Implications

Excerpts from "Popular Education: Concept and Implications," notes prepared on the development of the concept of popular education and its implications in the context of Latin America for an ICAE Executive Committee meeting in Trinidad, May 1981.

The term 'popular' suggests, at first, that this relatively new concept tries to differentiate itself from other 'non-popular' educational approaches. . . . It is recognized that education in any society is organized mainly for transferring the prevailing norms and patterns of behaviour and, accordingly, for reproducing the existing order. But, at the same time, it is accepted that education by itself contributes to social transformation. Education is both a process of renewal and a process for maintaining the status quo; a process of homogenization of the people and also of differentiation, since it is directed toward the creation of specialists. . . .

AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

Popular education claims to be an alternative educational approach directed toward the promotion of social change, rather than social stability, and toward the organization of certain educational activities. These are activities that contribute to liberation from the existing social order and to transformation; not merely social and economic reforms but structural changes that make it possible to overcome the prevailing unjust situation.

Advocates of popular education do not over-emphasize the role of education in this process. Since social transformation is a very complex phenomenon made up of social-economic and political variables, education must be integrated into a more general social effort. The specific task of education is related to the need for the transformation process to be assumed by the people as a 'historic programme' which offers the concrete opportunity for them to become the subjects of their

own lives. To achieve this, the people need to reach new and better levels of collective action, each time more organized, wider and more critical. One of the most relevant efforts is the education of popular groups that are potentially able to act as conscious agents of the process of social change.

Thus, popular education is a tool for developing critical social consciousness among the transformation agents in order to create specific dynamics in the action/reflection relationship. This process may be summarized, for clarification, as following this sequence:

- critique of the existing social reality;
- collective mobilization for social transformation;
- critical review of the action carried out;
- replanning of future action;
- re-evaluation of the previous diagnosis of social reality.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULAR EDUCATION

Popular education is both a theory and a practice of social action that is geared toward development of the capacity for organization, communication and critical reflection on processes and social relationships by the most deprived sectors of the population. It is a collective learning process and is implemented on the basis of a certain commitment to the popular sectors by those who take part. Consequently, popular education is also based on the participation of the popular sectors in the planning and implementation of new actions. These actions are conducted so that people can reach new levels of consciousness through the process of solving actual needs.

In Latin America, popular education has been generally carried out by non-government agencies. Its most relevant characteristics are:

- **The starting point is concrete.** Popular education works within the actual world of the popular sectors. It starts from the popular culture. However, we know that popular culture has not developed in a social vacuum. It contains important elements of the dominant culture that have been transferred to the people through 'non-popular' education (among other means) in a way that exerts ideological control from within. To pay too much respect to the culture of the people may thus lead to the reinforcement of domination rather than to the promotion of liberation. The key to solving this apparent contradiction is to develop a critical ability by which people can detach the liberating forces of their culture from the oppressive ones.
- **Popular education is active.** Like any other popular activity, popular education is directed toward action, but not any action. It gives priority to the Greek concept of praxis; the type of action that makes possible the transformation of reality.
- **Popular education avoids manipulation.** It attempts to be an educational system which is consistent in style with the new order that will arise in the future. This style is dialogical, horizontal and participative in the sense that all those who intervene in the learning process are also engaged in the search for new knowledge.
- **Popular education is a collective effort.** In most Third World countries, individualism is not only promoted but is even imposed. Solidarity and cooperation - basic pre-requirements for social organizations - are discouraged. Popular education, on the contrary, energetically stresses the need for approaching the learning process, and subsequent action, in a way that promotes cooperation and common action.
- Popular education is a flexible educational process of lifelong learning that continually adapts to the changing historical and local conditions of the participants.

IN CONCLUSION

Popular education is an adult education activity and, what is more, it is a specific response of adult education to the endeavour of social transformation in Third World countries. Most of the methodologies of popular education are also principles of adult education. The intent of popular education is to detach itself from the educational efforts that are directed to maintaining a social system that has been accused of being unjust and oppressive. Its appeal is for building an alternative education approach in Third World countries that is more consistent with justice and freedom.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT 3

EDUCATION IN MOZAMBIQUE

Education and the Struggle for "People's Power"

Contemporary woodcut of colonial exploitation

Schooling for Mozambicans is something very new. At independence, in 1975, only one in every ten Mozambicans could read and write. The great majority within the ten per cent of the population that was literate had only one or two years of primary schooling.

The Colonial Schools – Creating Failures

The few schools built for the African population under the Portuguese colonial regime covered only a tiny proportion of school age children. They were organized by the missions, while the state provided schooling for the settlers' children. Even by 1959, there were less than 400,000 in the pre-primary system for "indigenous" children, of whom only 7000 managed to enter the primary schools. Few students entered in the first place, and the failure rates were extraordinarily high for those who did. In 1960, only 2.7 per cent of those enrolled at primary level passed. It was a system designed to create massive failures. There was no provision for teacher training. The language of instruction was Portuguese, yet Portuguese was not taught as a second language. There were rigid age restrictions for each level so that many who did manage to pass could not go on because they were too old. By 1974, on the eve of independence, there were only 600,000 primary school students in a population of 10.5 million.

African students in the secondary schools were even more rare. These schools were in the cities and few parents could afford board for their children. Many children were ruled out because of age. In 1960, there were only 30 African students in a student body of more than a thousand in the main secondary school in the capital city of Lourenco Marques.

The children whose parents did manage to send them to primary school spent more time with rote drilling of the catechism and hard labour in the mission's fields than they did in learning reading and writing skills. The colonial regime had its own agenda for education. A pastoral letter from the Portuguese prelate, Gouveia, in 1960 explained that the idea was to teach the native population to read, write and count but "not to make doctors out of them! . . . The schools are necessary, yes, but schools where the native is taught the path of human dignity and the greatness of the nation that protects him."

Education in the Liberated Zones – Pedagogy of Empowerment

Once the liberation movement, FRELIMO, freed territory from Portuguese administrative control, democratization of schooling was a top priority. Democratic access was the first concern. Three years after the independence struggle was launched, there were more than 10,000 children in a network of bush schools throughout the liberated areas. By the end of 1967, ten teachers began to work to set up schools in Niassa and soon another 2000 were enrolled. By the end of the decade-long battle for independence, there were 20,000 primary school students, 300 secondary students, literacy activities for

Sam Barnes

adults, and training programmes for teachers.

Democratization of schooling also meant creating schools that were centers of participatory democracy. The relationship between teacher and student was very different from the authoritarian classrooms of colonialism. Students participated in all aspects of the life of the school, even up to determining grades. Mozambican history, geography and culture were introduced for the first time. Work and study were combined, with regular activities in production both to finance the school and combat elitist attitudes valuing brain work over work with one's hands.

Finally democratization of schooling meant that the schools began to play a different role in preparing young people for their lives outside of the school. FRELIMO spoke of creating "people's power" in the liberated zones, structures of grass-roots democracy and popular participation. Links between the school and the local community were closely forged. No community project or problem, no visit or holiday celebration was organized without active student participation. Schooling was understood not as something to encourage individual advancement but to serve the people.

Integrally linked with schooling for children were the activities of literacy for adults. The secondary school students in the FRELIMO school in neighbouring Tanzania worked to develop literacy primers and teachers' manuals. They went back to the liberated areas and taught during their vacations. In addition, important forms of popular education emerged in the liberated areas. A particularly vital one was the weekly community forum in which FRELIMO leaders and local people debated long into the night questions about race, sexism and who the real enemy was in their quest for a different kind of society.

Schooling after Independence – Gains Under Attack

With the coup in Portugal in April 1974 and the certainty of FRELIMO victory, a massive spontaneous literacy movement emerged throughout the part of Mozambique that had not been liberated. Secret sympathizers with FRELIMO chose literacy as a way of concretizing their support for independence. Students, cultural organizations, nationalist associations and church groups all began to organize

Joel Chiziane / Alfa

literacy. In Zambezia province, a whole network of "people's schools" was set up for both adults and children. Some groups adapted existing primary school materials. Others invented methods and wrote their own literacy primers. In some provinces teams did social surveys in the local community to determine a set of words linked to key issues on which to base the primer, all within the framework of literacy as "conscientization."

The literacy movement at the time of independence was characterized by community control, a diversity of organizational forms and local elaboration of teaching materials. It was integrally linked with the broader political process. The new FRELIMO government was committed to establishing "people's power" throughout Mozambique and the literacy movement was a key point for discussion, debate and a growing political consciousness among ordinary people. There are estimates that as many as 500,000 women and men became literate during this period.

One year after independence, education services were nationalized and the fledgling Ministry of Education and Culture took charge of all schooling throughout the country. Even during the transitional government, decisions had been made to throw out all the colonial texts and adopt new programmes of study. Now the various sections of the new Ministry - general education, adult literacy, technical education, the university, culture, physical education and sports - all embarked on new programmes. Major efforts were also put into teacher training.

Everybody was going to school! Primary enrollment went from 600,000 to 1,600,000 in the first five years after independence. Night schools were overflowing as adults tried to make up for lost time. Market women, factory workers and peasants in cooperatives did literacy on their lunch breaks. Civil servants studied basic policy documents on Saturday mornings. Upgrading programmes and training courses were part of every work sector.

From 1978 on, annual mass literacy campaigns were carried out. They were targeted primarily at workers in factories and enterprises, state farms and cooperatives. Fellow workers with four years of primary schooling taught literacy and those with six years of primary schooling did the post-literacy. The national census in 1980 showed that illiteracy had been reduced from 90 per cent to 72 per cent in the first five years of independence. In the first four national campaigns, more than 350,000 people became literate.

The massification of schooling inevitably brought other problems. Community demand exceeded ministry capacity to supply trained teachers, textbooks, curriculum and pedagogical support. Problems with the quality of teaching in these conditions showed up in the poor language and math skills brought to the next level. There were tensions between the vision of transformed classrooms and school-community relations, in the traditions of the liberated zones, and the tendency of minimally trained teachers to reproduce the authoritarian classrooms of colonialism.

As in other processes of transition, Mozambique has seen moments of dramatic advances and also periods of retreat and stagnation. Literacy after 1981 tended to go through a phase of declining numbers. The fundamental reasons for this include the dramatic increase in terrorist activities by the South African surrogate force, RENAMO, natural disasters and the prolonged economic crisis. The decline in literacy activity, however, was also due to the increasing formalization and bureaucracy of the literacy programme. Instead of being a forum for political mobilization around the urgent questions of the day, it became simply a means of gaining a credential. The campaigns were run more and more in parallel with the formal schooling system, with a common school calendar for opening the academic year and holding annual, national exams. The programme was limited to set textbooks, with little scope for regional or

sectoral diversity. The inadequately trained voluntary teachers tended to reproduce the authoritarian classrooms of their own primary schooling.

The global political process at this time was also characterized by a tendency to more formal hierarchies. A powerful national planning commission had emerged with top-down work methods and one-way communication. The literacy staff ceased to do political and pedagogical work at the base. Most of their attention was focussed on plan targets and this necessitated gathering data on enrollment figures, attendance and pass rates.

A somewhat uncertain movement for renewal of "people's power" emerged after the Frelimo Party's Fourth Congress in 1983. The Congress brought strong criticism of top-down communications and work methods that did not have faith in the capacity of ordinary people to organize and make decisions. One aspect of this was an initiative for a new approach to literacy, one that could counter the tendencies to formalize and bureaucratize it, recapturing the popular education of the independence period. It was decided to start with a pilot project in literacy staff training.

Exposure to other ways of doing literacy was one strategy for preparing the staff team of the pilot project. From this came the plan to send a group of Mozambicans to Nicaragua and Brazil, with its rich experiences of popular education. Another group went on a shorter visit to Guinea-Bissau and Portugal. On their return, the two groups joined other colleagues in the Manga Staff Training Centre in Sofala province. There they joined their experiences and ideas together during 1986 to work out a vital new approach to staff training for adult education.

Situation Today

Both the impressive gains of the first years and the efforts to tackle the weak points have been halted because of the war being waged on Mozambique by South Africa. Sheer survival is the issue. Schools, district education offices, literacy centres and teachers' homes are constant targets of attack by these South African backed terrorists. Convoys carrying the books and pencils for the new school year or the payroll for the teachers are regularly attacked. Rural producers fleeing terrorism in the countryside have little space in their lives for literacy at this moment. Literacy is not on the agenda for urban workers inventing schemes and scams for economic survival in the war-devastated society.

Only when the apartheid system is finally dismantled will Mozambicans be able to get back to their earlier dream of "making Mozambique a school in which everybody learns and everybody teaches."

A Heavy Toll: Costs of Destabilization 1981-1987

I: Human Costs

Estimated Deaths

murdered by the MNR	100,000
other war casualties	20,000
famine	150,000
increase in infant mortality	260,000
total	530,000

Displaced People (April 1988)

inside Mozambique	1,091,200
fled to neighbouring countries	750,000

Total lives directly and indirectly threatened by the famine created by the war 5,900,000

II: Physical Destruction

Health clinics/hospitals	490
Schools	1,800
Villages	150
Rural Shops	1,500

Damage to the Economy

Total cost estimated ..... US $7 billion

	1975 US$	1981 US$	1983 US$	1985 US$	1986 US$	1987 US$
a) GNP*	1,785m	2,102.5m	1,610m	1,347.5m	1,405m	1,427.5m
b) GNP/capita	167.9	171.0	124.3	98.8	100.4	96.8
c) Exports	185.4m	280.8m	131.6m	76.6m	79.1m	86.0m
d) Imports	394.4m	801.1m	636.4m	423.8m	542.7m	642.0m
e) External debt	n/a	n/a	(1984)2400m	n/a	3200m	3400m

* @ 1980 constant prices

1 DOCUMENTATION ON POPULAR EDUCATION METHODOLOGY AND EXPERIENCES

One of the treasures discovered by the team from Mozambique during their trip to Latin America was the wealth of material written about popular education. Speaking Portuguese turned out to be an advantage, since the Mozambicans had immediate access to a great deal of material written in Portuguese and Spanish. Much of this material was purchased and sent to Mozambique for use in the adult education training centres. For a full bibliography in either of these languages, contact the Latin American Council for Adult Education:

CEAAL
de Correo 163
T. Providencia
Santiago
CHILE

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2 GROUPS CONTACTED DURING THE SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGE

1. NICARAGUA

Ministry of Education, Directorate of Adult Education
Complejo Civico Camilo Ortega
Apdo. 108
Managua, NICARAGUA

In Nicaragua, the Adult Education Directorate in the Ministry of Education hosted our visit. Over the two months, we had the opportunity for exposure to work at every level. The first week was spent in a visit to the literacy museum, visits to literacy classes and briefings from national staff. We were introduced to the work of the various departments, with descriptions of the organizational structure and programmes of the three main divisions, literacy, basic primary education (levels 1-6) and basic primary education (levels 7-9). We also visited the regions of Matagalpa and Granada as well as the programmes in Managua itself. We later divided the delegation in half. One group spent the week accompanying the staff members of Granada as they carried out their day-to-day work while the other group did the same in Leon. We participated in the special events to celebrate the 5th Anniversary of the literacy crusade and in a week-long national seminar. We visited many Popular Education Collectives (CEPs) and participated in training courses. Towards the end, we spent a week integrated into different departments of the national office.

CEPA (Rural Education and Promotion Centre)
Apdo P-50
Managua, NICARAGUA

While most of the contacts in Nicaragua were through the Ministry of Education we did contact other groups involved in popular education. One of the most important of these was CEPA (Rural Education and Promotion Centre). CEPA's original work was in Christian base communities in the rural areas in the early seventies, long prior to the victory of the Sandinista Front in 1979. Their work now includes training in popular education methodology for church groups, state institutions and the grassroots mass organizations. CEPA also runs a methodological school that trains key educational staff. Our group from Mozambique participated in a week-long seminar for trainers in the state apparatus that brought together people from a variety of ministries and parastatal agencies to reflect on training methods and ways to build flexible and responsive bureaucracies.

ALFORJA
Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones
Apdo. 369,
San Jose, COSTA RICA

ALFORJA is a network of popular education groups in Central America of which CEPA is a member. Other popular education centres tied into the ALFORJA network exist in Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama and Honduras. Taking an "option for the poor," ALFORJA has developed a methodology designed to help people develop the skills needed to organize and take more control over their lives. Popular educators from the ALFORJA network such as Oscar Jara have been regular participants in Nicaraguan activities since the Sandinista victory, contributing to the training of educators and grassroots organizers for everything from block committees to health extension programmes. They have also worked in communities in the war-torn

areas of Nicaragua, seeing institutions of "people's power" as an important defence against the "contras." In other countries of Central America, ALFORJA works in programmes with refugee communities, using popular education methodology to improve the skills and problem-solving capacity of the refugees while they prepare for a return to their home countries.

2. BRAZIL

CEPIS (Popular Education Centre of the Sedes Sapientiae Institute) São Paulo
Rua Ministro Godoy, 1484
Perdizes, São Paulo
CEP 01515, BRAZIL

A popular education centre, CEPIS has four teams working with trade unions, the progressive church movement (Christian base communities), the popular movement more generally and health issues. It runs a resource centre, is tied into national social communications networks and does a lot of work on literacy.

CEDI (Ecumenical Centre for Documentation and Information)
This is run by Protestant churches and emerged 12 years ago when state repression allowed little room for action. It is based in Rio but has an office in São Paulo. It works with indigenous people, with the labour movement in the three main working class suburbs of São Paulo and with the rural trade union movement. Work in education is focussed mainly on literacy, which it sees as integrally linked with the resolution of other social questions. CEDI prepares materials and does training. They showed us some fascinating material from indigenous communities of rubber cutters in the Amazon. (In the states of Acri and Recife, illiteracy is as high as 60 percent, compared with only 10 to 12 percent in the more highly industrialized south.)

VEREDA Group, São Paulo
This group has been working since the end of 1984 in a centre set up to support 15 literacy groups. Paulo Freire was instrumental in getting the group started when he returned from exile to Brazil and his collection of documentation on literacy is housed in the centre. VEREDA's programme of activities includes production of curriculum materials, books for literacy facilitators and training seminars.

Embu Christian Base Community
We made several visits to Christian base communities which gave us a sense of the vitality of these progressive Catholic movements tackling a variety of issues in the urban shanty town areas. We visited literacy centres in some. In one, we went to a packed Friday night meeting where a priest in jeans presented the Mozambican visitors as people who could talk about their direct experiences of working to build "people's power." For the Embu community, this was part of a series of meetings on "people's power" that had already included evenings on the experiences of Cuba and Nicaragua.

Metallurgical Union, São Paulo
We spent a day with union organizers in a visit which included a full tour through the Volkswagen plant. We learned about the emergence of the trade union movement in the highly industrialized south of Brazil and had a chance to see the education materials developed to discuss trade union rights and worker health and safety questions. One of the most fascinating aspects was the way workers, through their unions, were linked to the broader political process. During our visit, the focus of attention was workers' participation in the constituent assembly.

URPLAN, Catholic University (PUC), São Paulo
This group emerged with the new political opening in 1978-79. It brings together people with experiences in literacy and trade union organization, both rural and urban. It acts as a support group for the popular movement with recent projects including social histories, training workshops and slide-tape shows on popular struggles. URPLAN did an oral history of a recent strike based on interviews with more than 50 workers and entitled 41 Days of Resistance and Struggle. They have also done slide presentations on recent land invasions in the north of Brazil and a bank workers' strike.

IBASE (Brazilian Institute for Socio-Economic Analysis)
Rua Vicente Souza, 29
CEP 22241, Rio de Janeiro
BRAZIL

This group includes a number of Brazilian exiles who moved from working underground in Brazil in the late 1960s to Chile, and from there to exile in Canada and Mexico, before finally returning to Brazil. In Canada, they formed a group called Brazilian Studies, and did excellent work on corporate links between Canada and Brazil. Since the early 1980s they have worked in Rio where they have grown to a group of about 45 doing a variety of projects. One is the monitoring of information using very sophisticated computer systems, which they then re-package in forms useful to the popular movement. People can subscribe to their monthly monitorings of everything from the economy in general to specific areas like housing, ecology, women etc. They also do broader studies, particularly related to economic issues, and prepare popular materials for issues like the constituent assembly.

IBASE is linked to a broader social communication network and has an audio-visual team that works with local groups to train them in producing materials related to their particular struggles. While we were there, urban squatter issues, black consciousness and women were the three main areas of work.

NOVA, Rio de Janeiro
This group has worked in literacy for 13 years doing various theoretical studies linking literacy to popular education. It began in a period of heavy repression with the support of the World Council of Churches. It sees its work in four broad areas:

1. support to popular movement/meetings
2. seminars (about ten a year)
3. studies (about two a year)
4. publications

FASE, Recife
This group was created with church support in 1974. It sees itself as a support group for the urban trade union movement and community groups. It has a documentation centre with AV material and videos.

ETAPAS (means "steps" in Portuguese and stands for Technical team for Support, Studies and Social Action), Recife
This is a new group involving people who have worked for a decade in urban communities. They work principally in community action in urban areas without trying to cover trade union movements or rural movements. They work both as a support group and directly in the community. Their main activities are training, support, social animation, studies, oral histories, production of teaching material and documentation. They work to promote Residents Commissions, which have emerged in various ways, spontaneously, through the church, through government and through political parties.

Justice and Peace Commission, Recife
This was created in 1976 and seen as the political arm of the church, a means for churches to attend to questions of social justice. In the past it was something to plug holes and put out fires, but now works in a more systematic way in identifying issues. Its recent work has been on urban land questions, with production of a video on land takeovers in urban areas and the conditions that prompt people to invade land.

GAJOP, Recife
This is a movement of lawyers committed to the popular movement. They offer legal counsel for strikes, trade union elections and residents' commissions. They have an educational dimension, promoting debates on police violence, etc. They also give practical training in how to organize meetings, take minutes, etc. They work in rural areas and with four urban trade unions.

ASPE, Recife
This is an organization of sociologists who offer their services to the popular movement. They translate the language of bureaucracy into something more accessible and serve as resource people for seminars amd training programmes of various kinds.

Participatory Research Collective,
Education Centre, State University of Pernambuco, Recife
Participatory research activities are linked to the popular movement in many parts of Latin America. There is a network of participatory researchers tied into the Latin American Adult Education Council, CEAAL. One of the member groups of the network is a collective of educators based in the education faculty in the state university, from where they contribute to a lively dialogue debating the claims of participatory research for academic respectability and scientific credibility.

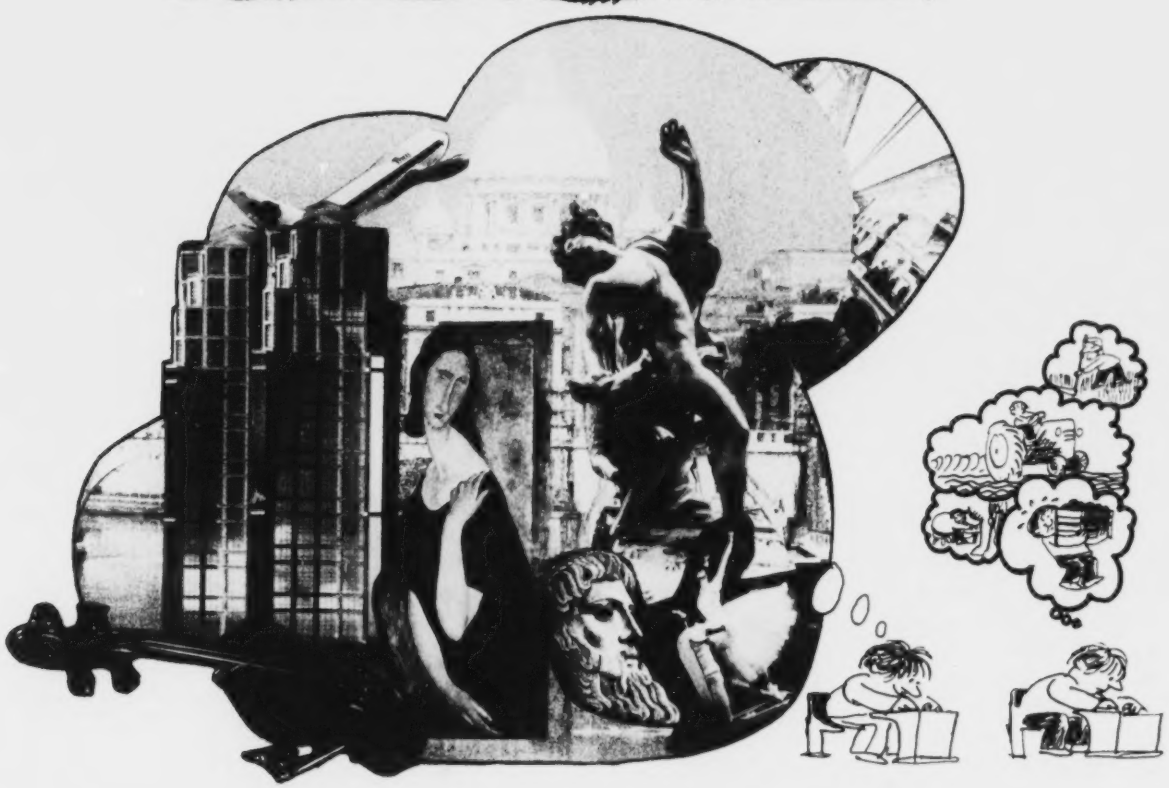
Peixotes Community School, Recife
This school was created by the community at a moment when it was not being served by the state schools, which at the time denied their children entry for lack of uniforms and shoes. The residents of four urban communities joined together to create a community school with support from the church.

MOBRAL, Pernambuco
MOBRAL was the name of the Brazilian government literacy programme, denounced regularly by the popular movement during the 1970s. By 1985, with the new openings through city elections that put progressives in power in some city governments, MOBRAL had become a space that allowed interesting work in literacy. The MOBRAL team in Recife was excellent. Those in it were surprised at what was possible within the state structure. They had embarked on a programme of participatory research in Recife to try to get in touch with people's needs in education. Soon after our visit, MOBRAL was officially dismantled and a new national literacy programme launched.

KNOWLEDGE

- What is it?
- Who has it?
- How did they get it?
- Why?

A game based on discussions with the VEREDA Group in São Paulo, Brazil

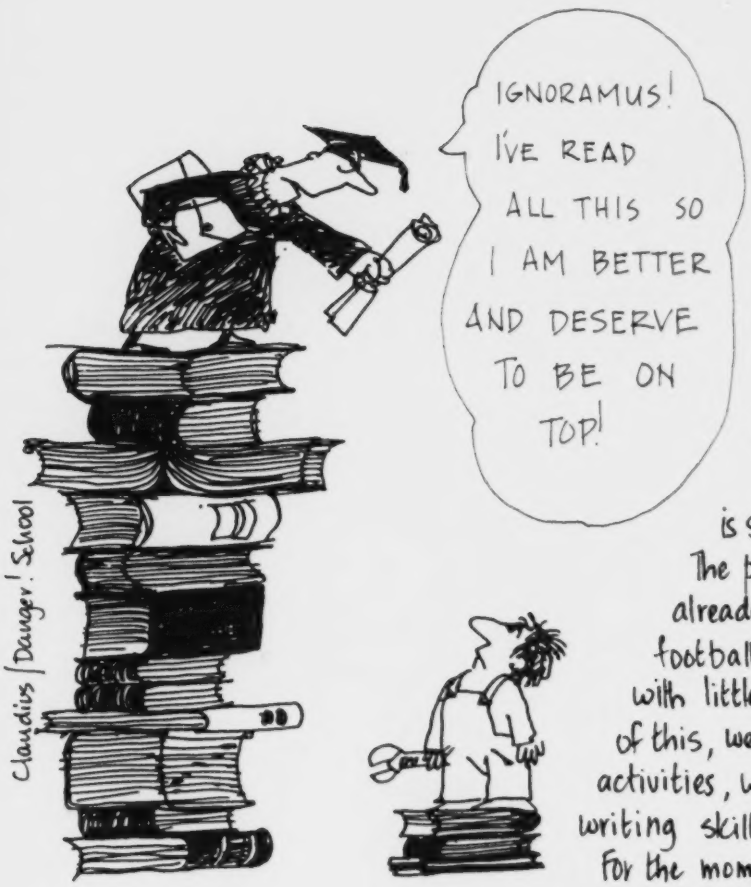


Background: One of the groups we met in Brazil was the VEREDA Group, a support organization set up in 1984 that serves as a resource group for 15 literacy programmes in shanty town communities in São Paulo. Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, helped to form this group on his return from exile and placed his rich collection of documentation on literacy in the VEREDA Group resource centre.

During the initial phase of its work, the VEREDA Group made contact with literacy practitioners working in local neighbourhoods. Common issues and difficulties rapidly emerged. One was discovering the code of generative words for a particular group of learners, how to research their socio-political reality in order to decide on the key words on which to base the literacy programme. Another was the process of "decoding" these generative words, working with them to see the levels of meaning and experience they led to, the kinds of social change they could generate. A third problem area was the tendency to formalize the teaching-learning process, making the literacy class into something resembling a primary school classroom. Others still were the lack of teaching materials, especially exercises, and the need for more adequate training.

The VEREDA Group established its programme of work in response to these issues and needs, including both production of materials and workshops as integral parts of its activities. The group also produces small booklets for literacy facilitators.

In our conversations with members of the VEREDA Group we were told that the question of training for literacy had triggered intense debate.



"We have already changed our approach various times and there is no marvellous solution. We have simulated classes but the participants cannot really create a situation that comes close to how it feels to be illiterate. We've invited the community; that works better but it's difficult to organize. If we convey too much information, it becomes a kind of bombardment, and a 'banking' process in which we 'deposit' knowledge in the 'empty' heads of the participants.

The first activity we use in training is something to break down vertical structures. The problem is the hierarchical relations already existent. These don't show on the football field but in the classroom, somebody with little schooling doesn't even talk. Because of this, we start by promoting non-authoritarian activities, which don't demand reading and writing skills.

For the moment, we are giving priority to the question of knowledge, what it is, who has it, how and why. We work in various ways to establish that people coming to literacy classes already know many things. Recently arrived peasants from the north west or shanty town dwellers in the "favelas" of Rio or São Paulo really do have knowledge and a lot of survival skills to maintain themselves in difficult circumstances. They also have a lot of practical knowledge - how to care for babies, ride bicycles, fish, repair cars, etc. From an activity to establish that adults really do have a good deal of knowledge, we go on to reflect on how they came to learn these things and why."

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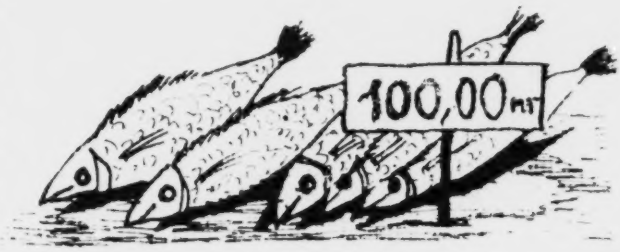
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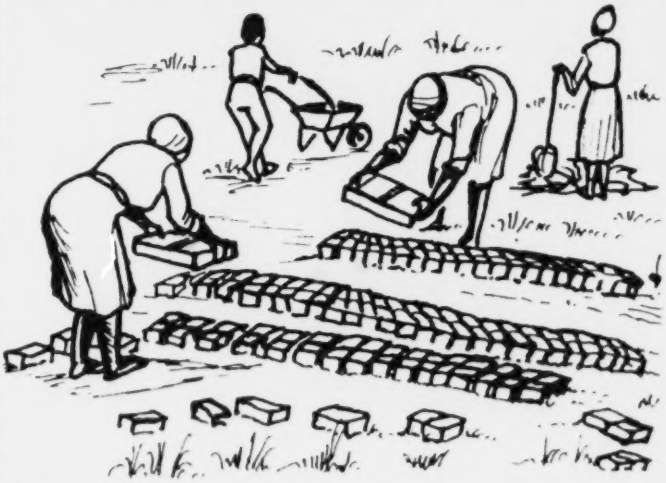


A game to discover some things about how and why knowledge is created

Objectives:

1. To discover and reflect on
   - some of the kinds of knowledge an adult possesses
   - how and why this knowledge was acquired
2. To examine the importance of valorizing this knowledge in a teaching-learning situation

When to use this activity:

This activity should be used at the beginning of a workshop or training course for literacy teachers or other popular educators. It serves to situate literacy in a social and political context, integrally related to building broad movements of social change.

Theoretical significance:

While the activity itself is simple, the reality on which it focusses, the process in a society through which knowledge is created, is not. Some understanding of the social creation of knowledge is fundamental for our work in popular literacy. Neither "knowledge" nor "ignorance" is a natural state, but one created socially. What constitutes knowledge and for whom different kinds of knowledge are appropriate vary from age to age. Powerful medieval kings saw no need for literary skills; these rested in the hands of a small group of specialized scribes. Women over the ages have been cut off from many kinds of knowledge. At the same time, the kinds of knowledge and skills that women possess from their roles in child-rearing and domestic labour have been deemed trivial in many societies.

In any society, there is a social process for deciding what phenomena, what kinds of life experiences (and whose) are of sufficient value and importance to be systematized and theorized into a body of knowledge. The forms for valorizing knowledge vary enormously from one society and one age to another, from the received wisdom of a council of elders to sets of institutions like universities, libraries and professional societies. And of course these decisions have everything to do with the power relations in a given society.

In our work in literacy, the whole relationship between teacher and student shifts dramatically when there is an active expectation from both sides that the students themselves are bearers of knowledge rather than empty vessels to be filled.

Materials needed:

Set of cards of various activities (Use of the activity cards is optional. If you do plan to use these activity cards, prepare them beforehand by mounting the sheets on heavier paper, e.g. the cover of an old notebook and cutting them out.)
Blackboard and chalk or flip chart and markers

Steps:

1. Identification of different things people know how to do and how (or from whom) they learned them

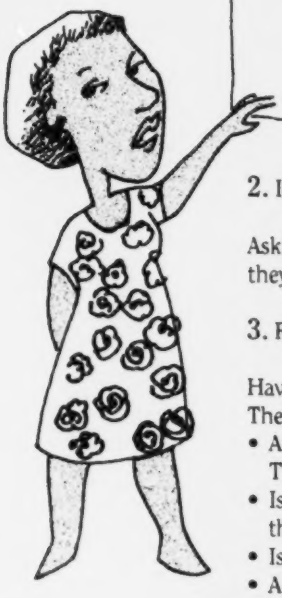
Option 1. Have participants choose an activity from the pictures of activities provided (making a fire, dancing, selecting seeds, writing a letter) and act it out until the others discover what it is. Once the activity is identified by the group, the participant acting it out describes how (s)he learned to do it. (This option works well in a situation where participants are hesitant to make claims for the practical kinds of knowledge they have.)

Option 2. Have participants choose an activity that they themselves know something about (riding a bike, filling out a form in a bureaucracy, bathing a baby) and act it out until the others discover what it is.

While the participants are presenting things they know how to do and how they have learned them, ask one participant to fill in the first two columns of a chart already prepared on the blackboard or on a flip chart. The columns are:

- What I Learned
- How I Learned
- Why I Learned

After each presentation, the participant doing the writing fills in the first two columns, noting down what the person knows how to do and how they learned to do it (e.g., riding a bike learned from an uncle; making bread learned from a grandmother; tool operating learned through an apprenticeship; fishing learned from elders in community).



What I learned	How I learned	Why I learned
riding a bike	My older sister taught me	

2. Identification of why people learn certain things

Ask the participants to work in pairs for five minutes, thinking about why they chose to learn the things they identified in step one. Complete the chart by filling in the third column.

3. Reflection on the many ways that people learn

Have the participants look at column two on the chart and think about the ways that people learn things. The discussion could include the following:

- Are there more ways of learning than those listed? (The list might include such things as family, radio, TV, school, church, apprenticeship, other children, community, etc.)
- Is there a difference between what and how you learn in the rural areas and what and how you learn in the city?
- Is there a difference between what and how men learn and what and how women learn?
- Are some kinds of knowledge given more importance than others? By whom? Why?
- Do you know of particular groups whose knowledge has not historically been recognized as important nor found in books? (e.g., African women with their knowledge of food production, fishermen and their knowledge of the seas, women and their knowledge of child-rearing, etc.) Why should this be so?

4. Reflection on the different reasons why people learn to do things

Ask the participants to look at column three on the chart and then ask some of them to explain more about why they have chosen to learn certain things. The discussion might include the following questions:

- Is individual interest the main reason that people learn different things?
- Does everybody have equal opportunities to learn things?
- How does your position in society influence your opportunity or ability to learn things? (e.g., rural or urban, man or woman, young person or old, from a privileged or marginalized ethnic/racial group).
- Are you more likely to want to learn new things if the person teaching demonstrates that they recognize and value the things you already know?

5. Reflection on the value of knowing how to read and write in a given society

Ask participants to think about the value of knowing how to read and write in comparison with knowing other kinds of things. Have them work in pairs to think about the following questions:

- Have reading and writing skills always been important for everyone? When did the ability to read and write and count become important here in our society (or for you) and why?
- Is there any stigma or shame attached to not knowing how to read and write? Has this always been so? If not, when did it change?
- Are other kinds of knowledge and skills and other ways of learning given less importance because of the high value placed on formal school certificates?
- What are the implications of this for our work in literacy?

Ask each pair to report back the main points to the whole group.

GENERATIVE WORDS –

Words leading to social change

A sociodrama from a training workshop organized by CEPIS in São Paulo

Background:

Our host group in Brazil was CEPIS, the Centre for Popular Education of the Sedes Sapientiae Institute, formerly the Faculty of Philosophy in a university serving only the privileged. Now it provides multiple services to the popular movement. CEPIS works through various teams, including a trade union team, a popular movement team, a health team and a pastoral team. Like many groups in Brazil, CEPIS sees itself playing a support role rather than carrying on actions in the front lines of the popular movement. Frontline groups (trade unions, women's groups, black consciousness groups, squatters movements, cooperatives) count on it for support in terms of studies and research, a resource centre including an audio-visual library, training programmes and development of specific resources such as a publication or slide-tape show.

The literacy team, like others in Brazil doing literacy, sees its work as integrally linked to this broader popular movement. The team members believe literacy cannot be done based on top-down decrees but only as action within the context of a movement for social change. Illiteracy cannot be resolved without resolving broader social questions of who has a voice and where power lies in a society.

We had the chance to participate in a week-end training course for about 30 participants, ranging from people with a few years of primary schooling to university students. Many were from community groups in the slum areas of São Paulo. The literacy activities promoted by CEPIS are linked to Christian base communities and consist of small groups of 6 to 8 per class that meet several times a week. The training team included Sister Iolanda who had worked in literacy for many years, using an adaption of Paulo Freire's methods.

The first day of activities focussed on literacy and its role in the popular movement, including a history of literacy in Brazil. Different historical moments and movements were identified, some promoting literacy for "liberation," inviting the oppressed to struggle for social change, and others promoting literacy for "domestication," persuading the oppressed to accept their marginality and poverty.

The second day focussed on the literacy materials used by CEPIS. It began by going behind the materials to the process that created them. This meant focussing first on the "generative" words selected, where they came from and how they came to be organized into a literacy curriculum. This activity was meant to take the trainees into the heart of the literacy methodology, enabling them to work more creatively with the teaching materials.

In the CEPIS literacy programme, the whole group comes together only when a new generative word is being introduced, through a slide. After that, people make their way through sets of work-sheets at their own pace, with lots of individual attention and support. Each learner has a notebook in addition to the work-sheets. Sister Iolanda explained the use of the notebook to us. *

A striking aspect to the observer was the supportive atmosphere. It was normal to see the literacy worker encourage a learner with a friendly hug or a pat on the back. Words of praise were frequent, including recognition of how tiring reading and writing exercises were for adults like João or Ana Maria, who came to the literacy class already exhausted after a hard day's work.

* "The notebook is theirs to write in as they choose, with no corrections from the teacher. Everything is done to create an atmosphere that is different from that of school. There is no teacher at the front, no marking notebooks with right or wrong, no exams. Everything is done to make the students feel confident in their own capacity to learn."
Sister Iolanda

Sociodrama in search of generative words

Objectives:

1. To understand and reflect on
   - how to select generative words and themes for literacy materials
   - how to organize them into a logical sequence for a literacy programme
2. To use this understanding as the basis for more creative adaptation of materials to particular circumstances
3. To discover how to "decode" a teaching picture
4. To reflect on the "art of the question"

When to use this activity:

This activity should be used at the point of introducing the teaching materials to be used in a literacy programme and should probably be the first activity. This activity opens up the question of how to teach starting from the learners' experiences and "the art of the question."

Theoretical significance:

Popular literacy is based on starting from the lives and experiences of the learners. Providing literacy teachers with a textbook or set of printed literacy materials can turn this around; the process can readily become one focussed on "giving" the lesson, reading the words of the text to the exclusion of the world of the learner.

Working with prepared materials may also create the expectation that the texts contain the "answers." Yet in many of our discussions, particularly in Brazil, there was a stress on education as learning to ask the right questions. Schools historically have given rewards for the right answers but in our work in literacy, we need to learn instead how to encourage people to ask the right questions.

Does learning the "art of the question" mean that we cease to use prepared materials? If so, we rule out the possibility of building on our own and others' past experiences, and run the risk of reinventing the wheel. So the question becomes, when we do use prepared materials and texts, how can we introduce them so that they are used with flexibility? How can we train people to use them as resources, to be adapted creatively, taking into account the particularities of each situation and the life situations of each group of learners?

Materials needed:

Blackboard and chalk, flip chart and markers or brown paper and chalk
Slide, photograph or drawing to illustrate a generative word
Papers with questions written out for Step 6

Steps:

1. **Sociodrama to discover generative words**

Ask three of the trainees to dramatize a conversation between a literacy organizer and potential learners in a context similar to the one where they will be working. Ask the other participants to be observers, noting down the key words in the interview as possible generative words for a literacy curriculum.

(In the course in which we participated in São Paulo, the trainees were asked to dramatize a conversation in a shanty town community in São Paulo between a literacy worker and a man and a woman who had just migrated from the impoverished northeast of Brazil because their land had been taken away from them by a big development project. The newcomers talked about how they had lost their land, how difficult it had been to find housing in the city, how long it had taken to find work, how the children had become sick with no money to pay for medicines, how impossible it had been to get enough food to eat when they didn't have their own farm, how difficult the city bureaucracy was.)

2. **Selection of generative words**

After the interview, ask the observers what words in the conversation seemed important or elicited strong emotions or occurred repeatedly. List these words on the blackboard as possible generative words.

Discuss what is meant by a "generative" word and the notion of generative words as words that lead to social change.

3. **Ordering sequence of generative words**

Ask the trainees to look at the words on the blackboard selected as generative words and decide in what order they should appear in the literacy primer. Explain that this is both a pedagogical/political and a

PICTURE 1 Latin America

PICTURE 2 Africa

technical decision. At the political/pedagogical level, the ordering of the words will depend on the organizers' reading of the larger social context and movement for change in which the literacy programme is inserted. Encourage discussion and debate among the participants, distinguishing between words that promote action and words that promote dependency.

At the technical level, the questions will be totally different depending on the language in use. As a general principle, it is important to start with simpler words and lead up to more difficult ones, that is "land" before "violence," for example. If the literacy programme is in Portuguese or Spanish, part of the concern will be to find words with regular syllabic families and ones from which a number of other words can be built. It may be that the technical difficulties of the word are overruled, however, by the importance of the word for the immediate lives of the literacy students and that pedagogical/political considerations win out over technical ones.

If the literacy training course is introducing students to already prepared material based on generative words, the next step is to examine these materials to discover the logic underlying the sequence of generative words.

"Generative words are like pebbles thrown into a pond, creating a ripple effect of concentric circles that broaden to a discussion about fundamental questions and lead to strategies for social action."
sister Iolanda

4. Facilitating Discussions Based on Generative Words

After studying the sequence of generative words making up a literacy curriculum, consider how to guide a discussion about a generative word.

Option 1. Project a slide to illustrate one of the generative words shown.

Option 2. Show a picture based on a generative word related to your current programme (e.g., an agricultural cooperative, displaced people).

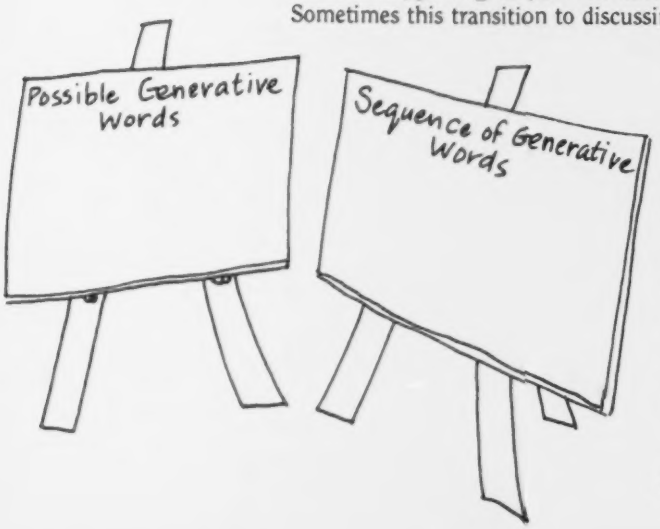
Ask the participants to take part in the discussion as if they were learners, but at the same time think about how the discussion is structured. Indicate that you will guide the discussion through four distinct phases.

1. What do you see in the picture?
2. What do you **think is happening** in the picture?
3. Is this **going on in your community**?
4. What can we do about it?

The first phase is based on, **"What do you see?"** and includes a complete detailing of everything to be seen in the slide or picture. It's probably good to discourage people from interpreting in this phase and instead concentrate on an exhaustive listing of everything in the picture.

The second phase is based on **"What do you think is happening in the picture?"** and includes a lot of questions asking the participants to interpret what they think is happening, what they imagine the figures might be thinking or feeling. Emphasize that there are no right and wrong answers and no need to arrive at a single interpretation. Be prepared for surprises. Where people are used to only one "right answer," multiple interpretations can generate a lot of frustration within the group.

The third phase links what is happening in the picture to what is happening in the participants' lives. **"Is this happening in your community?"** "Do you know anybody to whom this has happened?" Sometimes this transition to discussing day-to-day happenings flows naturally out of the second phase. Sometimes the person facilitating the discussion has to make the link.



The fourth phase is linked to action. **"What can we do about it?"** Posing the question of whether social action is possible in the community to tackle the problems posed by the generative words/slides also forms part of the discussion. It may be that the literacy class as such is not able to do much. But the members through their unions or cooperatives or churches or women's groups may be able to act.

You may want to signal each phase by writing on the board or flip chart "Phase 1, Phase 2" as you move through the phases. This may feel a bit awkward but the point is to "Think process!" In a training situation, it is often very difficult for the trainees to distinguish between the content and process of a given activity.

Writing the steps on the board as you guide the discussion may make them more discernible. Since decoding of visual images is so fundamental in literacy and in popular education generally, it is worth taking some extra time to build up skills in this area.

After "decoding" the slide or teaching picture with the trainees, ask them to identify what was done in each phase. Help them to see the difference by looking at the kinds of questions in each phase. Phase 1 questions attempt to get at a **description of what**, phase 2 questions to get at **interpretation of why**, phase 3 questions to get at **links to the learners' reality**, and phase 4 questions to pull out **implications for local action.**

Deborah Barndt

ALFORJA

5. Learning the "art of the question"

Divide the participants into two groups. Ask the groups to spend 25 minutes preparing to debate the statement: "In a process of teaching-learning, knowing the right questions is more important than knowing the right answers." Ask Group A to argue that knowing the right answers is more important and Group B to argue that knowing the right questions is more important. Ask each group to supply two members to defend its position.

After the debate, ask the participants to think about this question in relation to facilitating discussions about generative words. Are there ways to pose questions and validate answers in a discussion that establish that there is no "right answer?" How do we indicate room for multiple questions and interpretations of what is happening in the slide or picture?

6. "Open" and "closed" questions

Ask two participants to play the roles of facilitators leading a discussion about the picture illustrating the generative word used in Step 4. Give each of them a sheet of paper with the following questions.

FACILITATOR 1

Question 1. Do you think the woman in the picture is worried about how to find food for her children?
Question 2. Is it easy for her husband to find a job in the city?
Question 3. Do you think she'll have enough money to pay for medicine when her children get sick?

FACILITATOR 2

Question 1. Why does the woman look worried?
Question 2. Why doesn't her husband help out more?
Question 3. What will happen if her children get sick?

While the facilitators look over the questions, have the others divide into two groups, one to work as learners and one to be observers. Have both facilitators ask their questions.

Ask the participants to chat with the person next to them about any differences noticed between the questions of Facilitator 1 and those of Facilitator 2. After several minutes, ask the participants to share observations with the larger group. If observations are slow in coming, you might ask questions like the following:

- What differences can you see between the questions of Facilitator 1 and Facilitator 2?
- Which facilitator asked more "closed" questions?
- Did the difference in the questions bring out different kinds of responses from the literacy students?

TEACHER? EDUCATOR? ANIMATOR? FACILITATOR? COORDINATOR?

Role plays and a game linked to a conversation with NOVA in Rio de Janeiro

Background: A common concern of the groups we met both in Brazil and Nicaragua was the question of the "educator" in the process of "popular education." Questions were being debated about how to move from hierarchies and vertical relationships of power and knowledge to collectivities and horizontal relationships of power and knowledge. These applied to facilitator/learner relationships in a literacy centre, trainer-trainee relationships in a seminar, or superior-subordinate relationships in a workplace.

One interesting interchange around this question came in a discussion with Pedro Garcia of NOVA, a group in Rio de Janeiro. NOVA came into being in 1972, a moment of severe repression in Brazil. Created by grassroots education workers, NOVA has continued over the years with funding from the World Council of Churches and later NOVIB and Oxfam. In recent years as more opportunities for action have opened up, NOVA's work has concentrated on four fronts. These are:

- seminars (about ten per year)
- studies (about two a year)
- meetings and consultancies
- publications

The dialogue between Pedro and the Mozambican team was an interesting one. At one point the conversation turned to the role of literacy in creating a sense of nation.

Gonçalves: The people in Mozambique need to understand the necessity of national unity. Literacy can be a form of political action to create national unity. Literacy must create motivation for the people to get involved in things like communal villages.

Garcia: But doesn't this treat the people as if they are children with the adult (which in this case is the state and the party) in a position to determine what the people need?
Where do the people come in? What's the space of action for the people in this relationship literacy teacher/people or state/people?

Gonçalves: But don't you think the government needs to find ways to get the people involved in development?

Garcia: Yes it does, but there are social dynamics already at work creating a history and a relationship between the people and these beautiful concepts of ours like national unity or literacy or communal villages. Literacy tends to be effective to the degree that it is part of a larger political process that is effective in creating new spaces for action at the base.

Gonçalves: But how do we see the role of the literacy teacher in all this?

Garcia: That's not an easy question. The people have a creative capacity to solve their own problems. They have to, just to survive. If we come in with "the truth" we kill the possibility of self-discovery - and may end up by disorganizing the people. I think in all of this the key thing is to think how to strengthen the process - and not the product.

Clearly a vision of the popular literacy worker as someone meant to "strengthen the process," to intervene in such a way as to empower people to act more effectively in their own situation, demands that the training programmes work to conceptualize concretely these new roles. The groups we met used sociodramas and role plays as regular parts of their work, particularly around exploring new roles for teachers and learners. Some of the material for training courses also included games. We include one such game which we found later in materials from a group called PIIE in Chile.

In the sociodramas we saw, people acted out situations from real life, using words, gestures and improvised props. Often these served as the starting point for a discussion, followed by a "decoding" of the sociodrama in the same way as you might for a slide or photo. The amount of direction given to the group depended on the complexity of the sociodrama and the skills of the group in improvising on their own.

Role plays were very similar in nature, also involving acting using words, gestures and props. The main difference was that the role plays tended to focus not on broad social situations but on people's roles. These could be roles as they related to attitudes (individualist, authoritarian, permissive, etc.). They could be roles related to occupations (teacher, businessperson, police, student, etc.) They could be roles related to social groups and their way of thinking (trade union activists, counter-revolutionaries, peasant leaders, slum landlords). Role plays were particularly useful in reflecting on the role of the teacher in popular education, given that the role of the teacher in a process of vertical education is very different from the role conceived for the person promoting a process of popular education.

It would be hard to stress too much the importance of the "decoding." Dramatization is powerful and people tend to convey a lot through body language and facial expressions that can be captured and used as the basis for discussion about complex matters. We learned the importance of allowing plenty of time for "decoding" and encouraging lots of flexibility in interpretation.

A role play and a game on the "popular educator"

Objectives:

1. To reflect on the differences between "vertical" and "popular" teachers
2. To analyze and evaluate our own practices as teachers

When to use this activity:

These activities are probably most effective when used somewhere in the middle of a training programme. Ideally part of the reflection about different roles for teachers and students could then extend to trainer/trainee roles within the workshop itself. The experiences of the workshop could provide a basis for looking at the degree to which participants had found ways to break down the role of the trainer as the "authority figure," the one who knows everything, the one who always supplies the correct answer about how to do things.

Theoretical significance:

We are almost all products of schooling systems and societies which tend to assume that knowledge does (and should) reside within a fairly narrow circle of "experts." The rest of us live at varying distances from this concentration of power and knowledge, the distance measurable mainly, though certainly not only, through academic qualifications.

Popular education starts from the premise that those on the margins, those who have been made invisible and silenced by this world of experts, also have a lot of knowledge. A fundamental part of popular education is breaking into the silence, persuading people that their ways of seeing and saying are valid, useful and worth communicating to others. Unchaining the words of people who have been relegated to the margins, convinced of their own incapacity and stupidity, is a task that involves deconstructing one sense of self and building up another. Discovering ways of teaching and learning in this context is challenging, the more so because socially learned notions of "schooling" are so strong.

A. Role play on a "vertical" teacher and a "popular" teacher

Materials needed:

Blackboard and chalk, flip chart and pens or brown paper and chalk

Steps:

1. Preparing sociodramas on experiences of "vertical" and "popular" teachers

Divide the participants into groups of 5 to 7. Ask the members of Group 1 and Group 3 to recount experiences of teaching/learning situations where the teacher/facilitator has had a "vertical" style. The "vertical" teacher understands education as the transmission of knowledge from teacher to student, sees the teacher as the authority figure, makes the students into passive recipients of the teachers' knowledge, creates a classroom flow in which the students are always deferring to the teacher to define the correct answer. After the members have recounted their experiences, ask the group to choose one of these situations and dramatize it.

Ask the members of Group 2 and Group 4 to recount experiences of teaching/learning situations they have been in where the teacher/facilitator has worked as a "popular" teacher. The "popular" teacher

Statements about Popular Education (to be cut out)

In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with accepting suggestions from the group about modifying the programme.	In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with being prepared to speak about any theme.
In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with avoiding differences of opinion in order to prevent conflicts.	In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with preparing everything beforehand to avoid improvisation.
In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with exercising my authority in a friendly way but also firmly.	In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with encouraging the participation of all those who make up the group.
In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with not giving away my own political beliefs.	In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with valorizing the personal experience of each participant.
In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with encouraging democratic relations.	In my work as a popular educator I am concerned with giving instructions so that the group can work alone.
The role of a popular educator is to encourage communication between group members.	The role of a popular educator is to oppose authoritarian education.

The role of a popular educator is to believe that the people know everything.	The role of a popular educator is to transform society.
The role of a popular educator is to be the principal actor for social change.	The role of a popular educator is to deal with only those themes requested by the group.
The role of a popular educator is to make the group participate in political activities.	The role of a popular educator is to search with the group for the causes of problems.
The role of a popular educator is to deal with issues and themes related to the needs of the poor.	The role of a popular educator is to use participatory techniques only.
A group that works in popular education makes decision by consensus.	A group that works in popular education is concerned with training leaders rather than waiting for them to emerge spontaneously.
A group that works in popular education must be conscious that important changes will take place in the group only when there are also important changes taking place at a personal level.	A group that works in popular education has to, at times, disregard the feelings of some of those within the group in order to arrive at a decision.

It's not enough for all men to be educated.
We have to educate the whole man.
AND WOMEN!
WE ARE AMNLAE
A CLEAR MIND WITH GOOD IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY
A CRITICAL AND SELF-CRITICAL EYE
LISTENS BEFORE HE SPEAKS
A GOOD NOSE FOR POLITICAL CONJUNCTURE
ENERGETIC AND SPEAKS THOUGHTFULLY
HAS A BIG SUPPORTIVE HEART
WORKING HANDS
A GOOD SPORT
HAS THE RIGHT TO MAKE MISTAKES AND CORRECT THEM
WILLING TO GO WHEREVER NECESSARY
OPEN TO NEW KNOWLEDGE
CONCERN FOR SAFE SEX
CONCERNED ABOUT HIS COUNTRY AND THE WORLD
Adapted from a special edition of Tegucan' on Popular Education '88

understands education as starting from the knowledge and life experiences of the participants, works to validate and systematize the knowledge students bring into the classroom, respects the opinions of the participants, promotes communication from one participant to another rather than always through the teacher, links classroom discussion with community action. After the members have recounted their experiences, ask the group to choose one of these situations and dramatize it.

While the groups are preparing their role plays, the facilitator should spend some time with each group. The groups should be encouraged to work at the role plays in a way that avoids making caricatures, especially of the "vertical" teacher. The decoding of this role is not very interesting if the role play has portrayed the "vertical" teacher shouting, imposing arbitrary discipline, physically abusing the students, etc. It is the more subtle forms of controlling the teaching-learning process and imposing oneself as the authority figure that need to be explored. The ways "popular" teachers reproduce control should also be identified.

2. Presenting and "decoding" the role plays

Ask each group to present its sociodrama. After each presentation, ask the group to analyze the situation, looking carefully at the roles of both the teacher and the students.

If there is time, and if the participants think it would be interesting to do so, the sociodramas can be presented again, taking into account some of the deeper insights about "vertical" teachers and "popular" teachers that have emerged from the discussion.

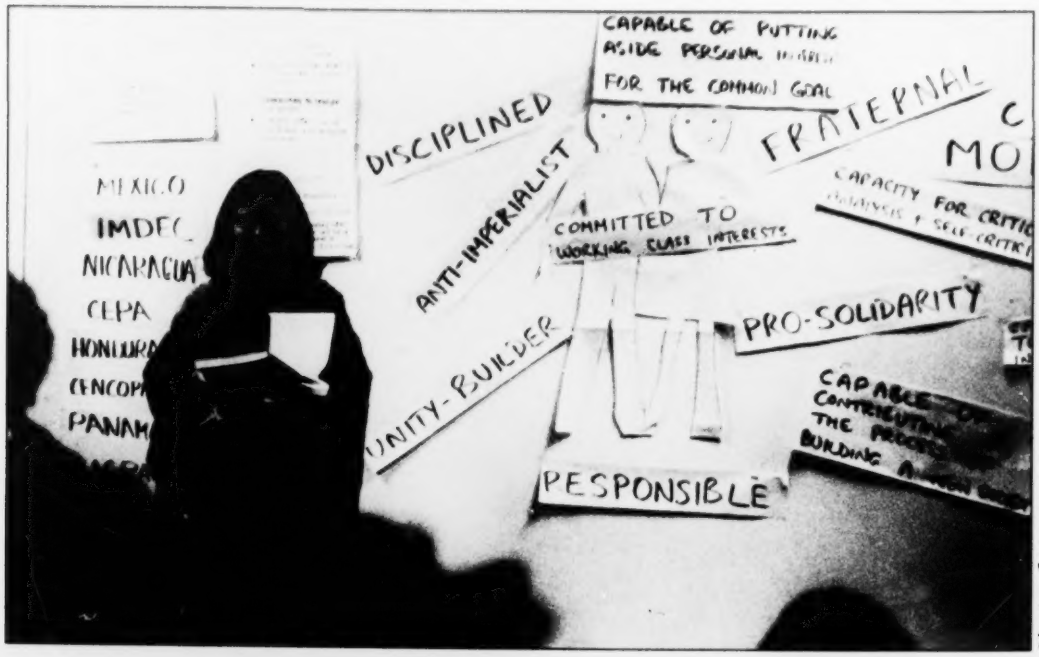
Encourage the participants to compare and contrast official schooling and popular education. Through this should come a clearer understanding of the role of the school system in social integration and control, and in reproducing ideas about society that makes it seem normal that a few should enjoy knowledge, power and privilege while the majority are relegated to non-expert roles on the margins, excluded from decision-making of any kind.

3. Brainstorming on the roles of the "popular" educator

Ask the group to think about the new understandings they have gained of the "popular" educator. Brainstorm on the roles of the "popular" educator by having each participant write down one role the "popular" educator should carry out on a piece of paper. Inclusion of the participant's name is not necessary. Collect the slips of paper, mix them up and have one participant pick out slips and read them aloud as another writes them up on the blackboard.

Some of the roles for the "popular educator" that might be included are:

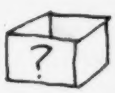
Facilitator	• facilitating a group training process
Animator	• animating genuine participation in an educational process that includes self-transformation
Communicator	• promoting a genuine relation of equals between participants and "teacher" in which they share experiences, knowledge, information and feelings. Each person's biography become an important resource for the teaching-learning process.
Problem-poser	• promoting a critical analysis of reality • helping to recognize problems, their causes and possible solutions
Organizer	• organizing learning situations which encourage self-discovery • transforming daily occurrences into occasions for learning in a way that allows the group to grow and mature



B. Game to analyze and evaluate our own roles as as teachers

Materials needed: Slips of paper with statements about popular education
Heavy paper to reinforce statement cards, e.g. cover of a used school notebook
Glue
Five containers labelled "Statements," "True, "False," "Neither/Nor" and "?". These containers can be boxes, bags, cans, etc.

Steps:



1. Preparing the game

The facilitators should prepare the game beforehand. Paste the pages with the statements on heavier paper. When dry, cut them into separate statement cards. Read through all the steps carefully. It is particularly important to understand clearly the options "Neither/Nor" and "?" since otherwise the game is reduced to simplistic statements of "True" and "False."

2. Playing the game

Place all five containers on the table. Ask one of the participants to put all the slips of paper into the container marked "Statements." Explain that each person will pick a slip in turn and read it out to the group. The group must decide where to place the statement. They have four options from which to choose: "TRUE," "FALSE," "NEITHER/NOR," and "?".

Ask the group to analyze each statement about popular educators or popular education, taking into consideration what they have been discussing in the seminar. All should be encouraged to give their opinions about where to place the statement, including the reasons why.

If the group concludes that the statement is clearly true or false, the slip should be placed in the appropriate container. If the group has differing opinions, the slip should be placed in the container marked "NEITHER/NOR." The statements in this container can serve as the basis for future discussion.

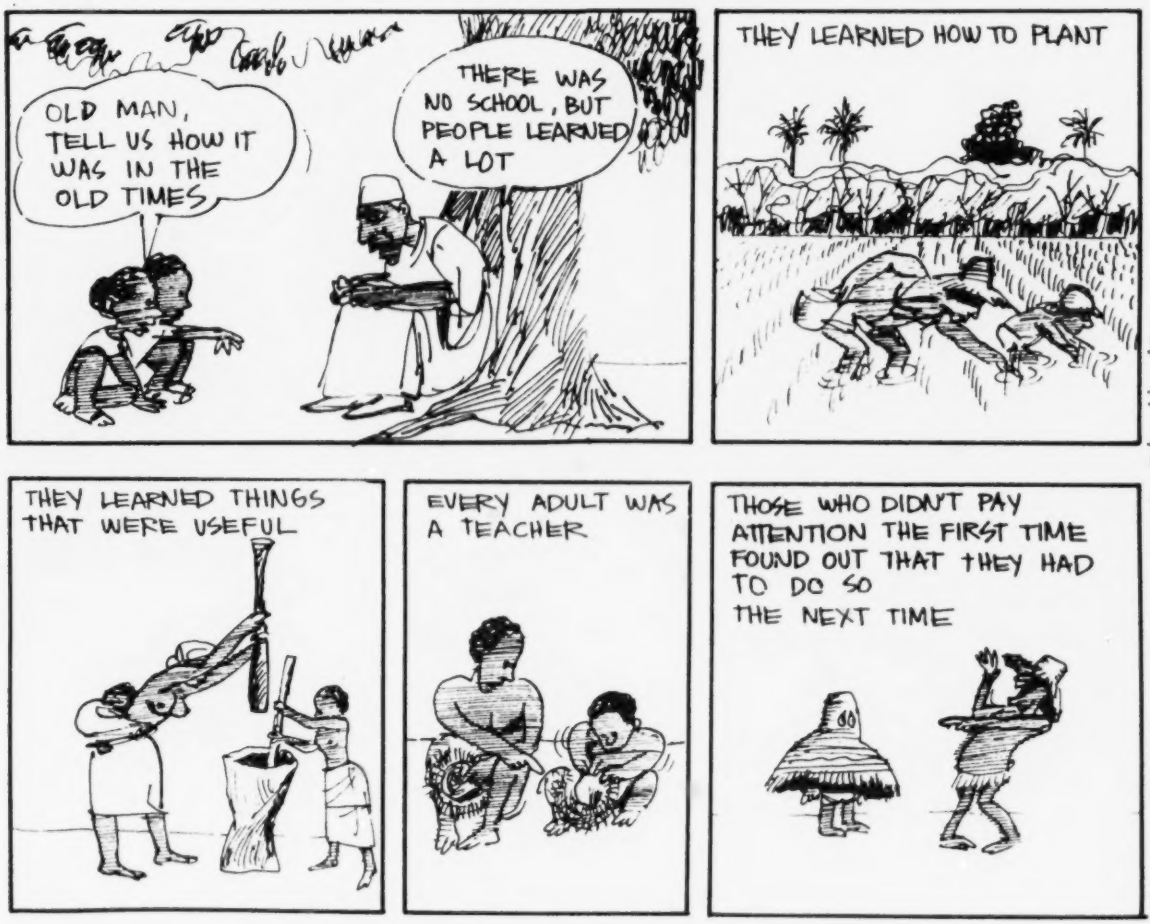
If the group decides that the decision about where to place the slip requires more information, place the slip in the container marked "?". These can also be dealt with at a future session, drawing on additional resources.

3. Reviewing the conclusions

To conclude, have the participants read out the true and false statements once again, in this way reviewing ideas about the tasks of a popular educator.

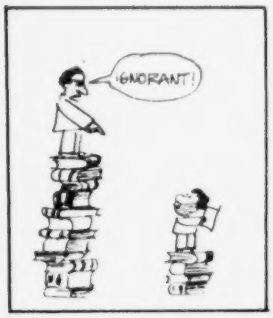
EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE AND SCHOOL SYSTEMS

A brochure on education, Danger! School, from Brazil


OLD MAN, TELL US HOW IT WAS IN THE OLD TIMES
THERE WAS NO SCHOOL, BUT PEOPLE LEARNED A LOT
THEY LEARNED HOW TO PLANT
THEY LEARNED THINGS THAT WERE USEFUL
EVERY ADULT WAS A TEACHER
THOSE WHO DIDN'T PAY ATTENTION THE FIRST TIME FOUND OUT THAT THEY HAD TO DO SO THE NEXT TIME
CLAUDIUS/IDAC/GUINEA BISSAU Reinventing Education '76

Background: One of the recurrent discussions during our trip was the question of knowledge. In the seminar with the Nicaraguans on "Popular Education," in the conversations with people like Pedro Garcia from NOVA in Rio and João Francisco de Sousa, the CEAAL coordinator for Participatory Research, we found ourselves joining in conversations posing fundamental questions about what actually constitutes knowledge, and who says so? Why have some ideas and areas of experience been worked up over the centuries into something we call "knowledge"?

These ideas and experiences have been systematized, written down in definitive texts, constituted into a "discipline" of study. They have become the subject matter for certification by universities, and the basis for professional careers. Education systems have been set up to reproduce these areas of knowledge, with "experts" established as gatekeepers to decide whether others have mastered this knowledge or not.



Claudius

Most of our experience of education is from authoritarian classrooms which have encouraged us to think that other people already have the answers. The school as an institution imposes a language, a way of speaking it and a rigid definition of the parameters of what can be said. We are judged on our capacity to reproduce what is conveyed in the classroom in a series of tests and exams. Many people are called "failures" or "low achievers" or "dropouts", and accept these judgments as a correct assessment of their value as human beings.

But what if those defining the testing and what is to be tested are themselves wrong? What if all the other experiences outside the school system, of workers in their factories, of women's work and skills in raising new generations, of peasant producers, of local communities, of old people, are not merely some kind of "folk knowledge" or "popular wisdom?" Could it be that these areas of knowledge and experience, these practical survival skills are intentionally trivialized and excluded? Does their designation as "merely" practical, "unscientific" serve as a means of social control, conveniently relegating to the periphery the labour of the vast majority in any given society? Do societies run by "experts" have to set up mechanisms that persuade the majority that their work, on the shop floor, in the field, in the kitchen, is of very little value?

In the bookstores in Brazil, we came across a book that poses some of these questions. *Danger! School* combines a short text with imaginative cartoons. Written in the early 1970s by a team of Brazilian educators based in Geneva in IDAC, the Institute of Cultural Action, it sets out to analyze the role of schooling in western European society, showing how the school works to create a society of distinct social classes.

When the IDAC team returned to Brazil in the late 1970s, they found debates on education on all sides and decided to publish *Danger! School* in Portuguese. The book was first printed in Brazil in 1980; by 1985 it was in its 22nd edition!

Study document on the link between knowledge and schooling

Objectives:

1. To reflect on how "knowledge" and "schooling" became linked
2. To reconstruct the history of education in our own countries and see at what point school systems were introduced and why

When to use this activity:

This activity should be used towards the beginning of the training programme, a way of focussing on the whole question of knowledge and how it gets created and validated through school systems.

Theoretical significance:

The links between education, schooling and knowledge in a given society pose serious and complicated questions for popular educators, particularly since schools, and the academic credentials they control, are such powerful institutions in society. Must education be limited to the "knowledge" that schooling systems, with the universities at their pinnacle, control? Whose knowledge is this and whose interests does it serve? Is there another kind of knowledge? Is it just the difference between "scientific" knowledge and "empirical" knowledge, or is there a social process of creating "knowledge" that is integrally linked with the history of the world socio-economic system and the forces that dominate it? Is there a rich store of "local knowledge," "women's knowledge," "peasants' knowledge," "old people's knowledge," "people of colour's knowledge" that is simply written out of history because "official" knowledge has always been the knowledge of a dominant minority, predominantly male, white and of European origin?

Materials needed:

Sufficient copies of the pages from *Danger! School* for work in small groups

Steps:

1. Discussion in groups on education, knowledge and schooling

Divide the participants into groups of 5 to 8 people. Ask each group to discuss the following questions:

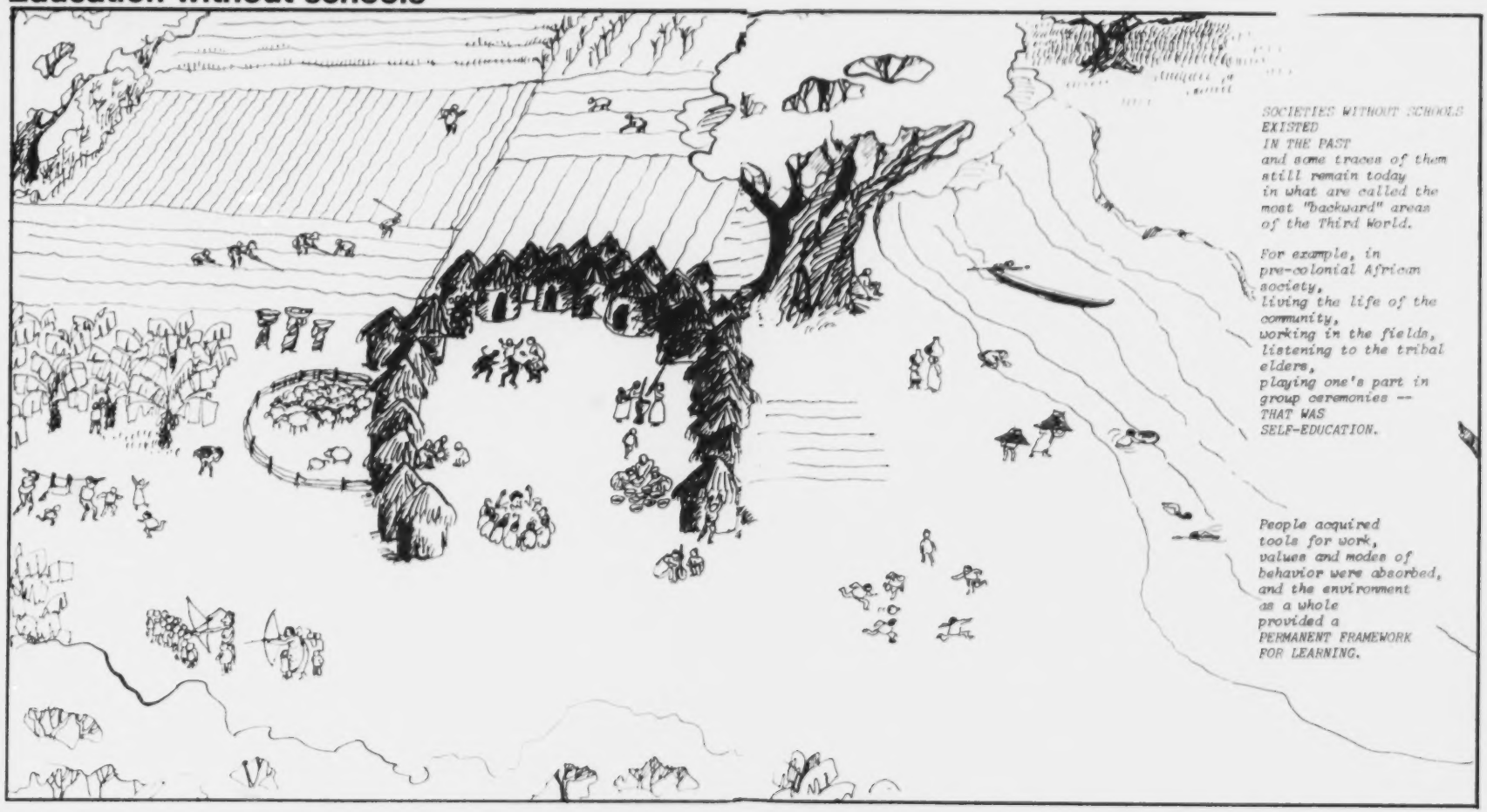
- Should education be reduced to schooling?
- What other sources of education exist beyond the school system?
- What kinds of knowledge exist in our society that the school system does not recognize? Why?

Have the groups come together to share their discussions.

2. Group study of *Danger! School*

Have the small groups form again to discuss the pages on the history of schooling from *Danger!*

Education without schools



THERE WAS NO
RECOGNIZED SCHOOLTEACHER

Every adult was
a "teacher".

Children learned from their
own experience and
from that of others.

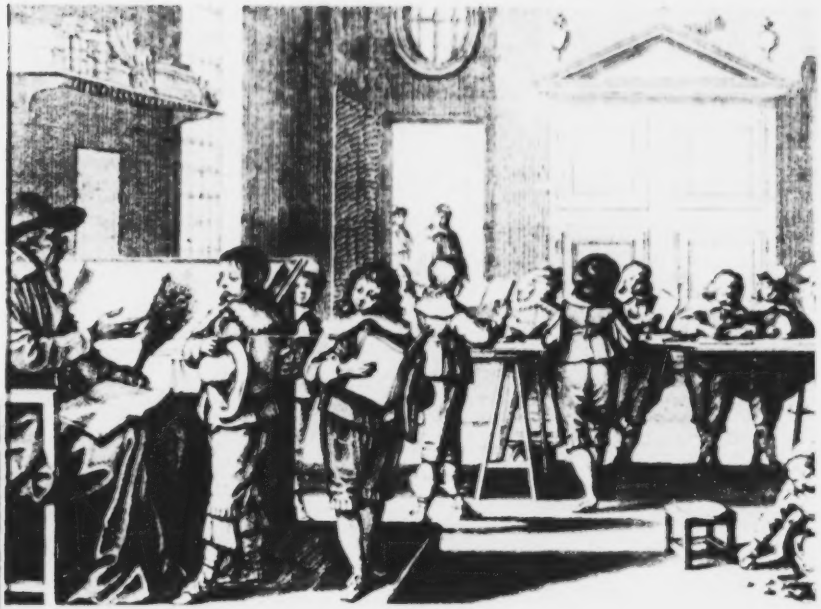
They learned by doing,
so that
knowledge,
life
and work
were inseparable.

There was no
tree of knowledge,
only a branch
flowering
in the
tree of life.

The school of the gentry

It was in the Middle Ages that education in Europe became the PRODUCT OF THE SCHOOL.

This meant that an entire class of people (mostly members of the clergy) specialized in transmitting knowledge and that this transmission took place in an artificial context, carefully isolated from the world of adults and cut off from daily life.



Over the centuries, these schools were to be reserved for the elite.

At first for the nobility, and later also for the bourgeoisie, which, as they grew in importance, came to claim the same privileges as the aristocracy.

The "others" -- peasants, workers, humble people -- were left with only practical learning in and through their daily work.

The school of the gentry respected tradition and attached central importance to morals and religion, verbal skills and abstract thought. Scientific knowledge which could bring change counted less than rhetoric and Latin, the symbols of a tradition that had to be maintained in a world which was thought to be unchanging.

This bookish, refined and literary culture was in harmony with the pupils' background and met their aspirations.

For the inheritors of an aristocracy that was certain that its power would last forever, getting an education was synonymous with learning to think, to conduct oneself well, to BE A LORD AND MASTER.

"In any civilized society, there are necessarily two classes of men: one which makes its living by manual labour, the other which lives on the income from its properties or the product of certain functions in which mental work predominates over physical labour. The first is the working class; the second I shall call the learned class.

Men of the working class soon need the labour of their children; and the children themselves need, at an early stage, to acquire knowledge of, and particularly familiarity with the customs of, the arduous work for which they are destined. They cannot therefore languish long in schools (...)

By contrast, those of the learned class can devote time to their studies, for they have more to learn in order to fulfil their destiny, including things which can only be learned when age has given the mind a certain level of development (...)

These are matters which are not governed by human will; they necessarily derive from the very nature of men and society: no one is capable of changing them ... We must start from invariables (...)

We may thus conclude that in any State in which proper attention is devoted to the education of citizens there must be two entire systems of instruction which have nothing in common with each other."

Destutt de Tracy (1802)

CITÉ PAR PROST(8)

One school for the rich, one for the poor

The schools of the gentry were to remain as long as the rigid and hierarchical structures of the feudal world were not yet rendered anachronistic by the development of industrial capitalism.

The revolution in technology along with the invention of the machine and the use of new sources of energy, changed the landscape of the world completely. New social classes emerged: an industrial middle class, master of technological progress, took over the power of the agrarian aristocracy; a working class was created through the concentration of poor and unqualified labourers around the new centres of production.

In this world in transition, schools remained the reserve of the elite. But faced with the economy's new need for technical and scientific qualifications, the contents of teaching underwent fundamental changes. The schools had to modernize.

The scientific disciplines took on a growing importance alongside the literary and classical fields.

The dominant middle class was also concerned that the working masses, crowded into large industrial centres should acquire a minimum of instruction. These "ignorant people" had to be socialized, in other words, educated to become good citizens and disciplined workers.

Little by little, there appeared alongside the SCHOOL OF THE RICH, another school, the SCHOOL OF THE POOR. Its function was to furnish future workers with the minimum of culture necessary for their integration into the lowest ranks of industrial society.

The coexistence of these two types of school gave rise to a situation of real SOCIAL SEGREGATION.

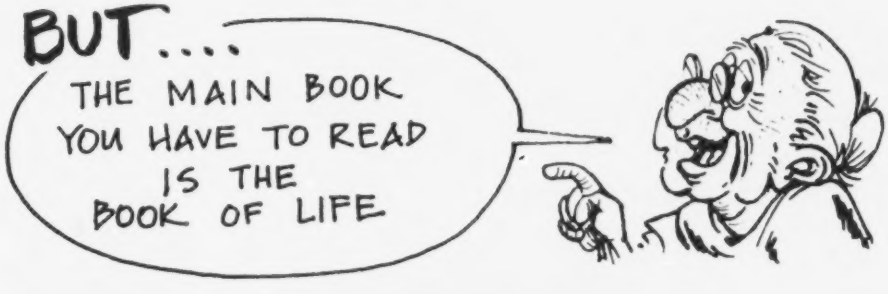
The children of working people went to "primary schools" which were not structured to give access to prolonged study.

The children of the elite followed a path separate from that of the nobility, and under the monopoly of the middle class.

Extracts from Danger! School, IDAC Document 16/17

There are teachers who only have confidence in books. "Mr Librarian" never takes his pupils to the museum, much less to the market, river or shanty town. The kids don't learn how to change a light bulb. They don't even know how to plant a tomato. They pass their lives away reading between the four walls of a classroom. And since in Nicaragua books are scarce, sometimes Mr Librarian uses most of the class time dictating pages and pages from books.

When we criticize "Mr Librarian" we aren't criticizing the library or the books. A book is a "light and compass" as Dario said. Books are indispensable tools for aquiring knowledge and to help us view the world.



I LEARNED TO BE A MID-WIFE BY HELPING MY NEIGHBOURS GIVE BIRTH.

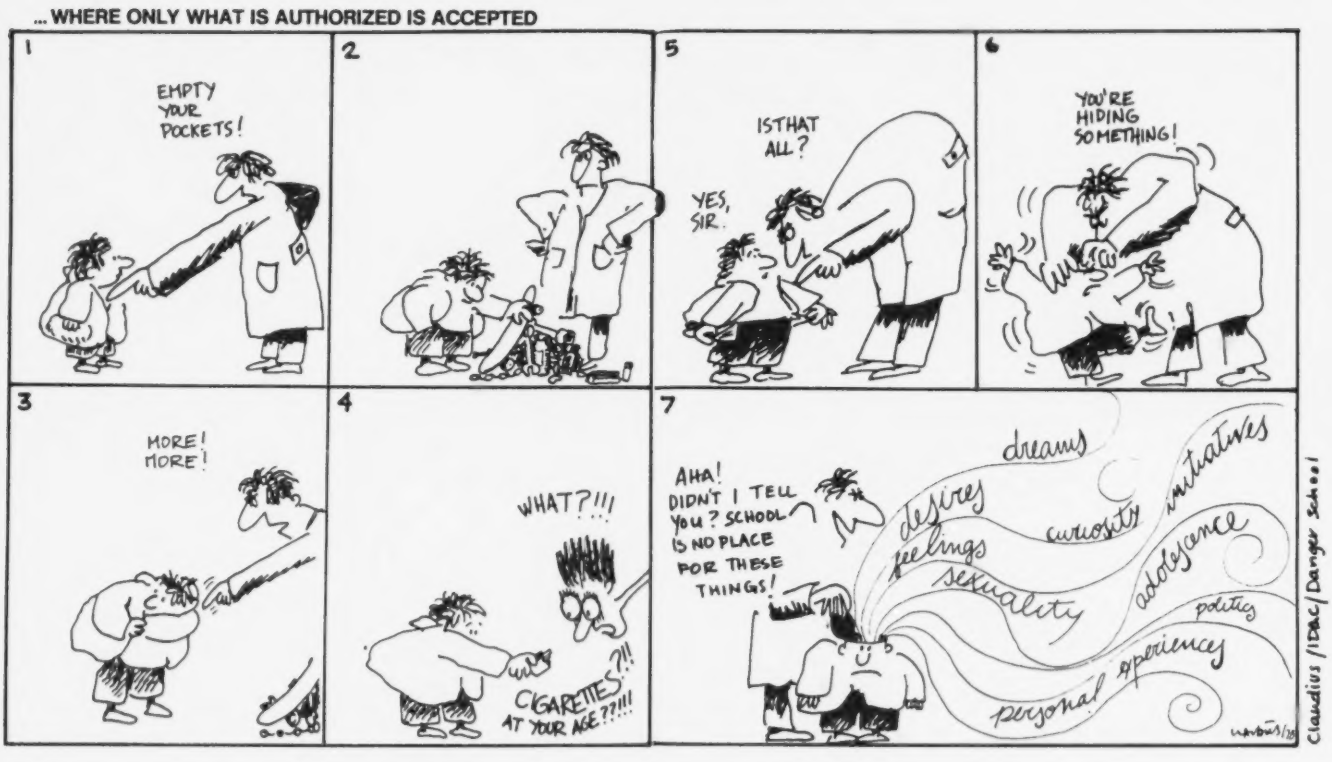
I LEARNED TO PLANT BY PLANTING SIDE BY SIDE WITH MY UNCLE.

WE ALL LEARNED TO MAKE A REVOLUTION BY MAKING ONE.

SO

YOU NOT ONLY DO THINGS BASED ON WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED
YOU ALSO LEARN FROM WHAT YOU ARE DOING.

Adapted from a special edition of 'Tayacan' on Popular Education '88



School. Remind the group that the pages describe the history of the development of mass education in Europe. The groups might consider the following questions in their discussion:

- What was happening elsewhere during the time that schooling in Europe was developing as described in *Danger! School?*
- When was formal schooling introduced here?
- What forms of education did it replace?
- Are traditional forms of education still at work?
- What are the positive and negative values in traditional forms of education? (For example, how do they present the role of women, old people, young people?)

3. Discussion about the history of education and schooling

Ask the groups to report back to the plenary on their discussions. Continue the discussion about the history of schooling. Where relevant, compare education under colonialism with education since independence. The following questions might be useful to consider:

- What impact did colonialism have on education?
- Who got to attend school, who passed and who failed in the schools during the colonial era? (This may include different systems such as state, church and private schools.)
- Did the struggle for liberation from colonialism bring changes to the school system?
- Did it bring new forms of education outside of the school system?
- Who gets to attend school, who passes and who fails today?
- Are schools useful in tackling the problems of rural development?
- What are the important educating forces today in addition to the school system?

If the group does not know much about the history of education, it may be useful to invite a resource person. Rather than having the resource person give a formal presentation, the group could pose their questions to the guest in a radio interview format.

EDUCATION: TRANSMISSION OR CREATION OF KNOWLEDGE?

Role plays on "transmitting" and "creating" knowledge

In our village we tried something new...
No time for that now. NEXT!
In our village we planted special trees to stop erosion.
We have a terrible problem with erosion too.
That's interesting! Where did you get the trees?

Background: Education as "transmission" or "creation" of knowledge was a persistent theme in our conversations with educators in Nicaragua and Brazil. It was easy to reject a view of education as a transmission belt, an educator with a head full of knowledge depositing it in to the empty heads of the learners. It was difficult, however, to train educators to teach in a different way than they themselves had been taught, or for learners to see the classroom interaction as a dynamic process in which their own previous knowledge and experiences counted for something.

Many ideas emerged about education as a process in which a "coordinator" provides a setting for teaching-learning, "facilitating" a dialogue to which people bring their own ideas and experiences. Through this interaction, people can discover the validity of their own ideas and experiences, and systematize them through a collective process that creates new knowledge.

Some recognized the danger of oversimplification in these formulations, presenting the facilitator as a neutral element when in fact he or she is a powerful and potentially even a manipulative figure. Others pointed to the error of romanticizing the knowledge brought by the learner, as if "the people" have knowledge that is pure and not itself a social creation. Yet if we think about it, we know that peasant farmers and urban slum dwellers also have their "tastes" and "needs" shaped from outside their own communities. When asked about the kind of health care her family needs, a peasant woman is more likely to ask for a doctor and injections than for a para-medic promoting community health education programmes. Few communities are so remote as to have remained outside the "Coca-Colonization" of the world.

We talked about these questions with Rosa Maria Torres, an Ecuadorian popular educator whom we met in Nicaragua. Torres now heads the pedagogy department in the national literacy campaign in Ecuador. In her book, *Nicaragua. Revolucion Popular. Educacion Popular* she poses some of these questions. She argues that the history of domination and exploitation which Latin American people experienced during the development of capitalism has meant that ordinary people have been denied access to knowledge. They are caught up in a unified world system, integrated into it as producers of an

expanding industrial base, yet they are denied the technical, intellectual and professional knowledge that goes with it.

Torres looks at the problems of literacy in Latin America. Few people in Latin America have had access to education. Fewer still have chosen to put their knowledge at the disposal of the oppressed and exploited. For those who do, what options are viable? One error is to be paternalistic, offering knowledge ready-made, making literacy the transmission of knowledge to a passive audience. The other error is to idealize the people, expecting everything must come from them, from the definition of a self-education project, to its organization and the definition of its contents.

Torres sees in Nicaragua a resolution of these opposing positions through a literacy crusade in which collective responsibility was taken by the state, a broad array of voluntary organizations and the illiterates themselves. Each group contributed important knowledge and skills. At the end, the newly literate people took on responsibility for follow-up. They organized local "Popular Education Centres" in which they served as "Coordinators" and "Popular Promoters," sharing their knowledge with others, guaranteeing continuity.

Role plays on "transmitting" and "creating" knowledge

Objectives:

1. To reflect on the difference between teaching-learning as "transmission of knowledge" and teaching-learning as "creation of knowledge"
2. To analyze actual literacy classes to see this process in action

When to use this activity:

This activity should be carried out at the point of looking at the interaction between educator and learner. It would be particularly useful in combination with field visits to local literacy centres. Discussion of these themes can sharpen the perceptions of the participants and their capacity as observers. Taking up these themes after the field visits would help provide more data for analysis. It could be useful to develop more transcripts of the classes observed during the field visits, thus building up materials immediately relevant to your own situation.

Theoretical significance:

Is education best understood as a process of transmission or creation of knowledge? Are people coming into a literacy centre empty vessels waiting to be filled by educators who bring all the answers? Is it a one-way transmission belt? Or do those coming into the classroom bring the resources of their own biography, their own life experiences (though these may be lives of struggle, over-shadowed by the dominant culture and "official "knowledge).

In fact, all people, adults or children, construct their worlds through an active processing of ideas, arriving at knowledge based on their own experiences. In a social context, they test out those ideas, think and rethink them. The popular literacy centre or classroom becomes an environment within which learners are involved in exploring topics of interest, using talk, reading, writing and numeracy as tools for learning. The teacher becomes facilitator, mentor, supporter and resource person rather than dispenser of information. The educators' own biographies also become resources for learning, with their own particular uses of literacy, mathematics or science made accessible in the teaching/learning process.

Learners interact with whatever they find in the classroom or literacy centre, be it teacher or text. They are by no means passive receptacles of knowledge but active bearers of knowledge and experience against which they test everything introduced through the classroom interaction. From this comes the creation of new knowledge.

Materials needed:

Small slips of paper for each participant
Transcripts from actual teaching sessions (Use those provided in the kit or transcripts from your own field visits.)

Transcript 1 **"Transmission" of Knowledge**

Literacy Class at Matola Industrial Company in Mozambique
Theme: Houses yesterday and today
Participants: Factory workers in post-literacy
Teacher: José Fernandes

Teacher: Today we are going to talk about houses. People have lived in many different types of houses over the years, in round houses and square houses. They have also built their houses from many different materials, from bamboo and mud and thatch in the old days to cement and metal sheeting for today's modern buildings. Leonardo, did your grandparents live in a round house?

Leonardo: Yes.

Teacher: Simão, was your grandparents' house made of mud and thatch?

Simão: Yes.

Teacher: Did your grandfather make it?

Simão: Yes.

Leonardo: Alone or with somebody else?

Simão: With other men in the village.

Teacher: Tomas, what kind of house do you live in now?

Tomas: A cane house.

Teacher Is it square?

Chissano: Yes.

Teacher: Marcos, what is your house made of?

Marcos: Cane, bound with bush twine.

Teacher: Does it have a metal sheet roof?

Marcos: Yes.

Teacher: What are modern houses made of?

Sansão: They are made of cement.

Teacher: Are factories and public buildings made of cement?

Chorus: Yes.

Teacher: So houses used to be round and made of bamboo, mud and thatch before there were modern building materials. People used simple construction techniques like binding with bush twine. Later people started to build bigger houses that were square and had metal sheet roofs. Nowadays, people construct their houses with cement and metal sheets.

We've finished the reading now. What are the words in the text that you don't understand?

Milton: I don't understand what "técnica de construçao" means. *

Teacher: "Técnica de construçao" mean construction technique, the way you choose to build something. It refers to the mixture of building materials and how you put them together. Do you understand?

Milton: Yes.

Maria: But can't "técnica de construçao" also mean a woman who is a technician on a construction project? A man would be a "técnico" but a woman would be a "técnica."

Teacher: No, it means construction technique. Are there any other things you don't understand?

* In the Portuguese language, "técnica de construçao" has two meanings. It means construction technique but it can also refer to a female construction technician.

Transcript 1 **"Creation" of Knowledge**

Literacy Class at Matola Industrial Company in Mozambique
Theme: Science and its contribution to agriculture
Participants: Factory workers in post-literacy
Teacher: Henrique N'Guiraze

Teacher: António, when you plant maize in your "machamba" (field), how many seeds do you usually plant in one hole?

António: Three or four seeds.

Teacher: Why?

António: Well, you can't be sure if they're good seeds. Bugs get in them so some don't germinate.

Teacher: But that's with local seeds isn't it? Ana, if you have treated seeds how many do you plant in one hole?

Ana: Oh, just one.

Teacher: That's interesting. Why is that?

Ana: Well, you can be sure it will grow well.

Teacher: But if you don't have seeds you can count on, you have to put in three or four. Is that it?

Carlos: Yes. Or maybe even five.

Teacher: But now what happens if you plant five and four germinate? You've got four stalks of maize coming from the same hole. What do you do?

Julia: You do nothing! You just wait for them to grow and give you lots of maize.

Teacher: But doesn't the agricultural technician advise you to leave just one, so you can grow one strong, healthy plant?

Alberto: You mean take shoots of new maize and pull them out?

Alfonso: But if four germinate, you'll have more maize.

Teacher: But won't they crowd each other out? Isn't it better to have one healthy stalk?

Luisa: You mean throw out shoots of new maize? That's unthinkable!

When the infant has diarrhoea you should immediately buy rehydration salts and take her to the nearest health post.
I don't have the money to buy those packets of special salts.
My grandmother taught me to use rice water for a running stomach
I always use coconut milk.
I know how to mix sugar, salt and water to make those salts.
Margie Braun-Meyer

Steps: **1.** Brainstorming on how to validate learners' knowledge

Ask each participant to write down on a slip of paper one answer to the following question:

- How can a popular educator validate a learner's knowledge in a teaching situation? If necessary, elaborate on the question, explaining that what is wanted is concrete ways to signal the value of a learner's contribution in a teaching-learning setting (e.g. words of praise, asking the learner to tell more, taking up the idea and linking it to the broader discussion, writing the idea on the board or flip chart, quoting the idea to others, using body language of smiles, a handshake or a hug).

Ask the participants to make a positive sign (+) beside their answer. On the other side of the paper, make a negative sign (-) and indicate one way that aneducator can reject the value of a learner's contribution (e.g.silence, not writing it up on a flip chart, going on abruptly to the next participant's answer, saying it's wrong or not useful or not relevant, proceeding to something else unrelated, using body language of frowns or turning away).

Collect the slips and have two participants write up the answers under the headings: "VALORIZING LEARNERS' KNOWLEDGE" and "REJECTING LEARNERS' KNOWLEDGE." Ask participants to pick out a slip at random and read the answers aloud as others write them on the board or flip chart.

Promote a group discussion about how these two kinds of behaviour by the educator affect the learners' ability to learn.

2. Group study of transcripts of literacy classes

Divide the participants into groups of 4 to 6 each. Ask each group to study and discuss the two transcripts from literacy classes, being sure to touch on the following questions:

- From these two examples, how do you think these two educators view teaching?
- In what ways is the students' knowledge recognized and validated?
- In what ways is the students' knowledge dismissed as irrelevant?
- Are some people's contributions more accepted than others? (women? men?)

3. Role plays of literacy classes

Have the groups come back together and ask two of the groups to act out the literacy classes, using the transcripts as their script.

Ask the participants to compare the discussions from the two literacy classes, analyzing the roles of the facilitator and literacy students to see how knowledge is being transmitted or created. The discussion could include questions like the following:

- Which people in the group know something about house building or planting?
- Do both facilitators encourage everybody's experiences and knowledge about house building or planting to be heard? How?
- Who is doing most of the talking?
- Is the facilitator deepening the discussion in either role play by follow-up questions?
- Is the facilitator broadening the discussion by linking the answers with things already said?
- Is the facilitator providing the answers or providing the questions?
- Which questions are open-ended (inviting the learners to share their own ideas and experiences)?
- Which questions are closed (allowing the learners only to say "yes" or "no" to the ideas of the facilitator)?
- Does either role play show a way to systematize local knowledge through a question and answer process? Which one? How?

4. Re-play of role play(s)

Ask those who did the role plays to do them again if they want to, incorporating what they have learned from the discussion. This is particularly important for the group that did the role play of transcript 1, providing an opportunity for the educator this time to "create" rather than merely "transmit".

EDUCATION AS LEARNING TO ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

A comic book from Nicaragua to stimulate critical consciousness

Background: A striking feature of the trip to Latin America was the use of cartoons and humour as a way of taking a critical stance towards the powers and institutions oppressing the lives of ordinary people. Humour through design was a key aspect in social communications everywhere we went. The posters, pamphlets, books and training materials of the popular movement were striking in their use of graphics, the cartoon format often softening what would otherwise have been very harsh social commentary.

In Nicaragua, much of the literacy training material was done using cartoon figures. Pamphlets and manuals for MIDINRA, the agrarian reform ministry, UNAG, the peasants' union and ATC, the farm workers' union, all used plenty of visuals and a minimum of text. Popular groups in Brazil also used cartoons and comic books extensively, for everything from organizing for the new constituent assembly to writing popular histories.

Meetings, workshops, training programmes and publications were all characterized by informality. Most people we met in leadership positions were concerned about work methods that did not allow deference to authority or put leaders in privileged positions. This included styles of dress and communication. They took pride in being accessible to their colleagues and to ordinary people.

In general, there was a striking sense of irreverence for all kinds of authority. Perhaps in part this comes as the result of living in a part of the world that has suffered the agonies of many repressive dictatorships. People throughout Latin America are all too familiar with military and political leaders who have made much of formalities, enjoying the pomp and ceremony of office, while systematically robbing their people and running death squads.

Everywhere there was a stress on building critical consciousness. Part of the organizing strategy for the popular movement was to encourage people to have a voice, for groups of peasants, women, native people, urban workers, squatters, to put words to their own demands. In Nicaragua, government officials and educators seemed to have favourite words to mobilize for action. At one meeting we attended, Commander Bayardo Arce, one of the Sandinista Front leaders, urged people to be "belligerent" in demanding that the state structures respond to their needs. Education Minister Cardenal urged his staff to be "audacious" in coming up with innovative ways to do education. He stressed that the Ministry of Education did not "own" education in Nicaragua and urged his staff to incorporate the best of popular education traditions into their adult education programmes.

These calls to action were taken up. While we were in Nicaragua, Latin American political leaders and economists met in Cuba to look at the international debt question and the role of the IMF (International Monetary Fund). One of the results of their meeting was recognition of the need to make these discussions accessible to ordinary people. Tayacan, a collective of popular educators working in Nicaragua, some of whom are also Ministry of Education employees, took up the challenge. The result was a 47-page comic book about the debt question and the role of the IMF called *The Eternal Debt*.

Comic books as a technique to stimulate critical consciousness

Objectives:

1. To look at economic questions in our own country and how they relate to the external debt question
2. To learn how the IMF operates in relation to the external debt
3. To reflect on humour as a tool for critical consciousness

When to use this activity:

This activity should be used only after the participants have some fairly solid insights into what popular education is and how to use popular education methodology.

Theoretical significance:

There was a stress both in Nicaragua and Brazil on building popular movements. People talked of creating "participatory democracy," or "people's power." In all of this there was a profound questioning of societies run by "experts" passing down pre-defined parameters of how to "be" and to "do" and to "feel." There was a stress on building a new "civil society" in which ordinary women and men would trust their own skills and experiences and have them validated as useful in building a different kind of society.

One way "experts" control society is by establishing a language and an "academic" way of speaking that intimidates ordinary people and excludes them. Humour can often break through this.

Another way "experts" control society is by controlling information and presenting difficult issues in ways that make them more rather than less complex. Ordinary people are made to feel incompetent in the face of questions related to foreign exchange, balance of payments, their country's external debt or the IMF. They see themselves as economically illiterate, powerless against huge international forces. Implicitly the message is that the poverty and daily struggle just to survive that characterize their lives are somehow normal and inevitable, not things that can be changed.

A comic book presentation of the world economy and the role of the IMF is much less daunting than a thick economics textbook, and can become an important tool for understanding the economic forces at play and working to change them.

Materials needed:

Basic background information including when your country joined the IMF, main policies adopted by the IMF structural adjustments programme in terms of prices, wages, devaluations etc., size of external debt and recent price trends for major imports and exports.
Question sheets for Step 1 (optional)
Pieces of paper
Pages of the comic book *The Eternal Debt* (multiple copies for work in small groups if possible)

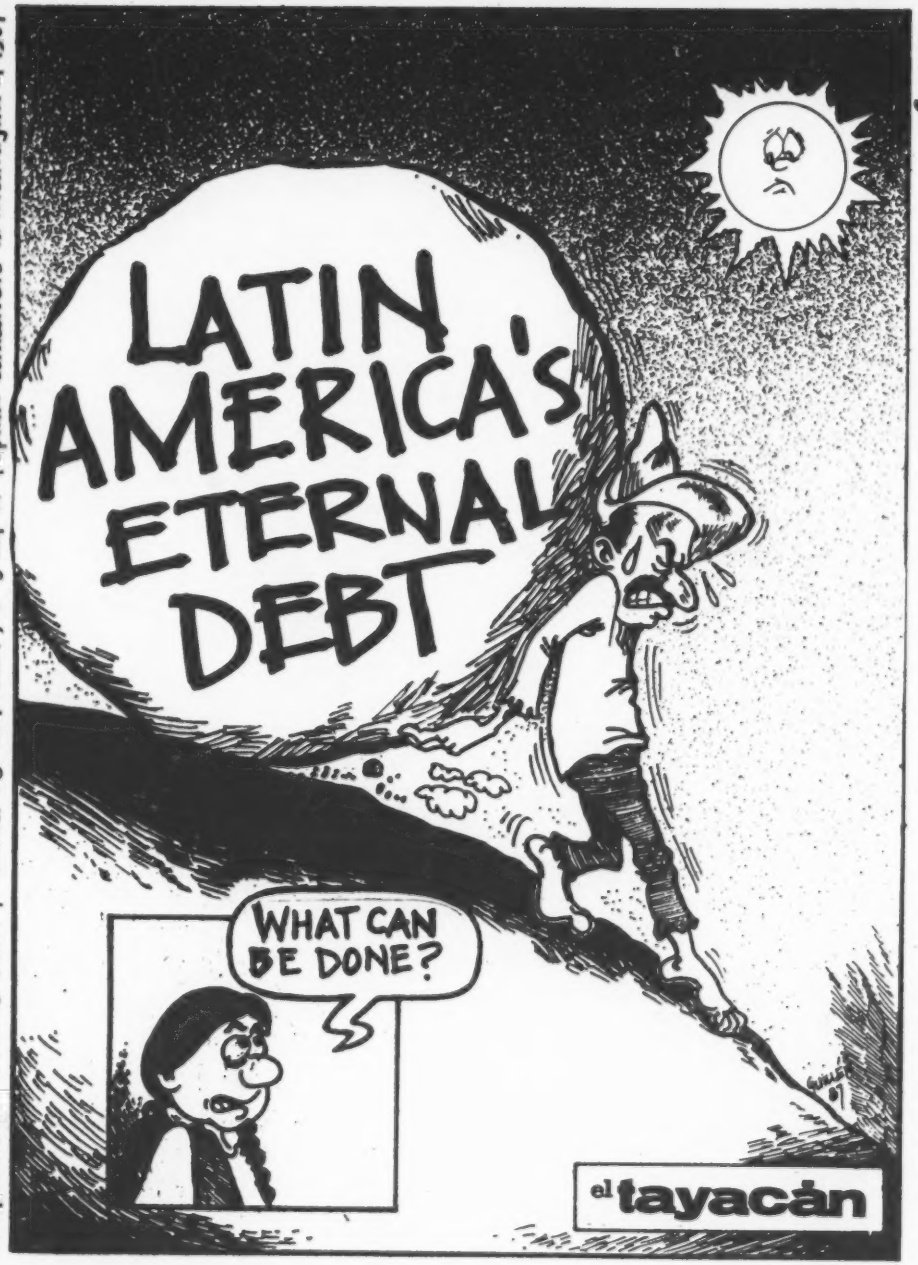
Steps:

1. Reflection on the economy

Divide the participants into groups of 4 to 6. Ask group members to work through the following questions as a way of beginning to think about the economy of their own country. (You may want to prepare question sheets beforehand, adapting the questions to the context of your group.)

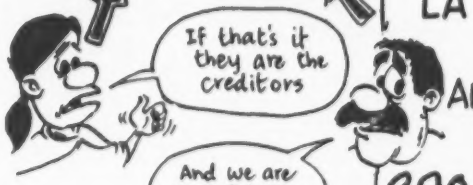
- What work do you do?
- Do you work for yourself or does someone pay you?
- Do you or does some member of your family have a farm?
- What do you produce?
- What can you buy with what you produce now? last year? five years ago? (e.g. What can you buy with one sack of maize now and what could you buy five years ago?)
- What things do you need in order to produce maize or rice or beans that come from outside your country? (e.g., tractors, pesticides, trucks, diesel, etc.)
- Do you produce cash crops like cashews, cotton, copra, tea to sell outside of your country (export)? Do you know what prices your country has been getting for its main agricultural exports over the last few years?

Adapted from a comic book produced by 'Tayacán', a group of popular educators in Nicaragua in 1987



What is the External Debt?

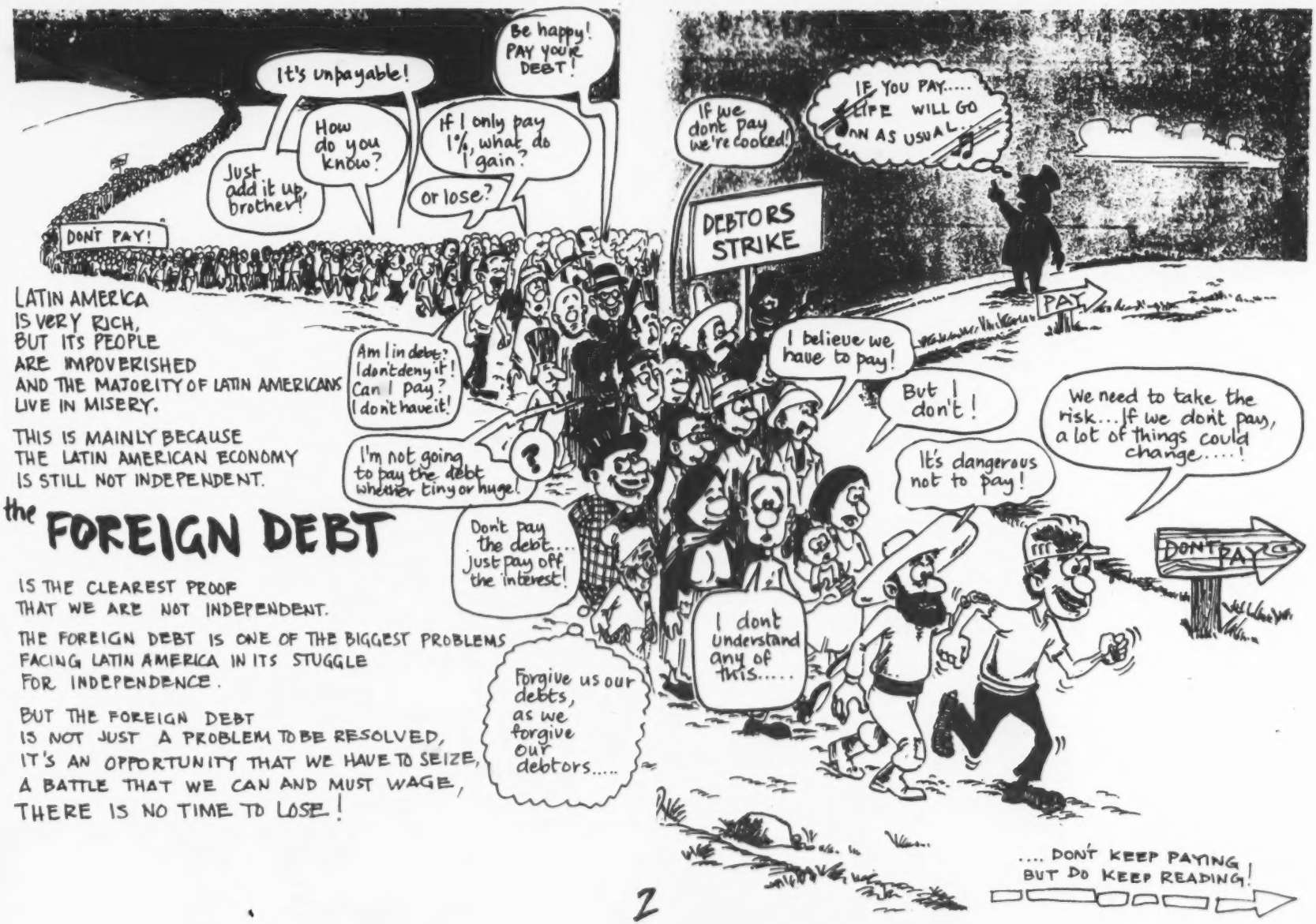
The External Debt is the debt, the money which our countries owe the banks, governments and other institutions of the richest capitalist countries of the world* as repayment for what they have lent us over the past 20 years.



LATIN AMERICA HAS AN EXTERNAL DEBT OF 390 BILLION DOLLARS

And this debt is growing... when we finish writing this it will have reached 400 billion and in 1988 it will reach 420 BILLION....

*The richest industrialized countries in the world are: USA, Canada, Japan, Great Britain, Italy, France and West Germany. Of the 360 billion owed by Latin America, 200 billion is owed to the United States.


It's unpayable!
How do you know?
Just add it up, brother!
If I only pay 1%, what do I gain?
or lose?
Be happy! PAY YOUR DEBT!
DON'T PAY!
If we don't pay we're cooked!
IF YOU PAY..... LIFE WILL GO ON AS USUAL.
DEBTORS STRIKE
PAY
Am I in debt? I don't deny it! Can I pay? I don't have it!
I believe we have to pay!
But I don't!
We need to take the risk... If we don't pay, a lot of things could change.....!
I'm not going to pay the debt whether tiny or huge!
?
It's dangerous not to pay!
Don't pay the debt... Just pay off the interest!
DON'T PAY
I don't understand any of this.....
Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.....
.... DON'T KEEP PAYING BUT DO KEEP READING!

LATIN AMERICA
IS VERY RICH,
BUT ITS PEOPLE
ARE IMPOVERISHED
AND THE MAJORITY OF LATIN AMERICANS
LIVE IN MISERY.

THIS IS MAINLY BECAUSE
THE LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMY
IS STILL NOT INDEPENDENT.

the FOREIGN DEBT

IS THE CLEAREST PROOF
THAT WE ARE NOT INDEPENDENT.

THE FOREIGN DEBT IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS
FACING LATIN AMERICA IN ITS STUGGLE
FOR INDEPENDENCE.

BUT THE FOREIGN DEBT
IS NOT JUST A PROBLEM TO BE RESOLVED,
IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY THAT WE HAVE TO SEIZE,
A BATTLE THAT WE CAN AND MUST WAGE,
THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE!

HOW DOES ONE PAY THE EXTERNAL DEBT?

WHAT WE ARE PAYING
IS NOT THE DEBT.
(IT'S SO BIG THAT WE COULD
NEVER PAY IT ALL OFF)
WHAT WE ARE PAYING YEAR AFTER YEAR
IS **THE INTEREST**
ON THAT DEBT
(WHICH IS ALSO ENORMOUS!!!)

AN EXAMPLE:

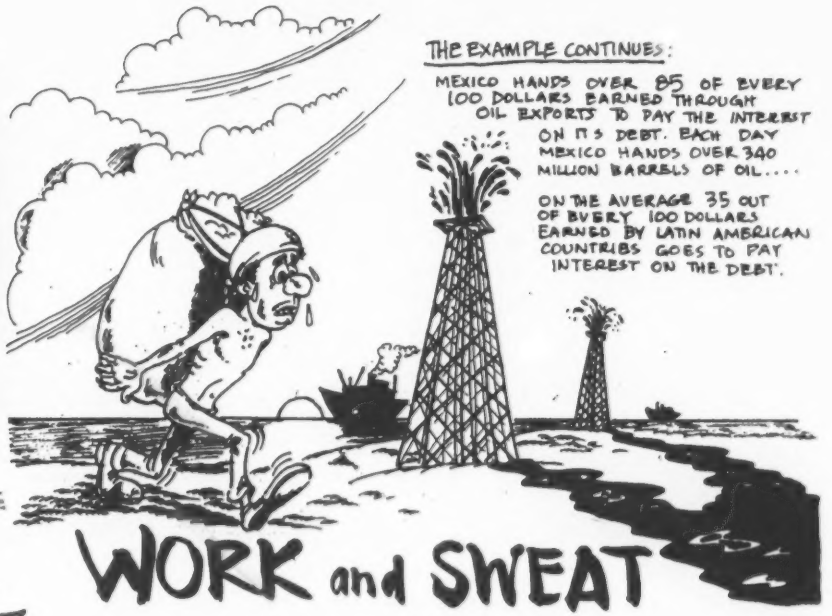
MEXICO, WITH A DEBT OF $110 BILLION
PAYS $12 BILLION IN INTEREST.
IN 10 YEARS IT WILL HAVE PAID $120 BILLION
IN INTEREST
.... AND STILL WILL BE OWING THE
ORIGINAL $110 BILLION.....

THE EXTERNAL DEBT HAS TO BE PAID
IN DOLLARS (OR OTHER "HARD" CURRENCY
WHICH IS FOREIGN EXCHANGE.
THIS MEANS IT CAN BE EXCHANGED FOR DOLLARS)
TO GET THE DOLLARS TO PAY THE DEBT, EACH
OF OUR COUNTRIES HAS TO EXPORT, TO SELL
ABROAD, THE PRODUCTS OF THEIR LAND,
THEIR MINES, SEAS
AND FACTORIES.

THE EXAMPLE CONTINUES:

MEXICO HANDS OVER 85 OF EVERY
100 DOLLARS EARNED THROUGH
OIL EXPORTS TO PAY THE INTEREST
ON ITS DEBT. EACH DAY
MEXICO HANDS OVER 340
MILLION BARRELS OF OIL....

ON THE AVERAGE 35 OUT
OF EVERY 100 DOLLARS
EARNED BY LATIN AMERICAN
COUNTRIES GOES TO PAY
INTEREST ON THE DEBT.



WE PAY WITH OUR WORK and SWEAT

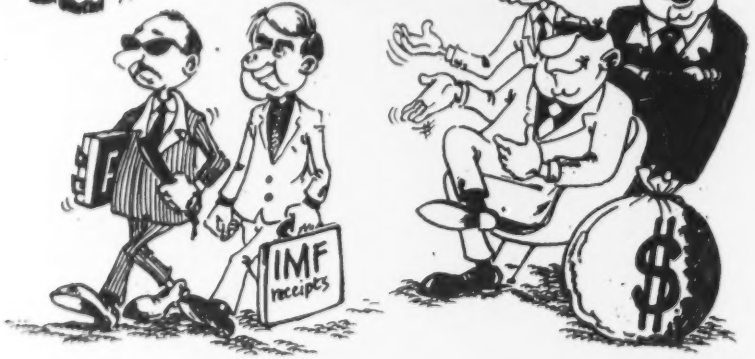
TO WHOM IS THE DEBT OWED?

Are these banks the famous International Monetary Fund?

OUR COUNTRIES PAY THE DEBT MAINLY TO THE BIG BANKS OF THE RICHEST COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD. THESE BANKS ARE LINKED TOGETHER, MANAGING HUGE SUMS OF MONEY. THEY HAVE MUCH INFLUENCE ON THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD'S RICHEST COUNTRIES, AND AT TIMES OVER OUR GOVERNMENTS TOO.....

WALL STREET IS IN NEW YORK, WHICH IS THE MAIN POWER CENTRE FOR THE WORLD BANKERS. IT'S FROM THESE BIG BANKS THAT A GREAT PART OF THE CONTROL OVER THE ECONOMY OF THE CAPITALIST WORLD IS EXERCISED.

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF) IS NOT A BANK, IT'S LIKE A POLIC FORCE FOR THE BANKS.

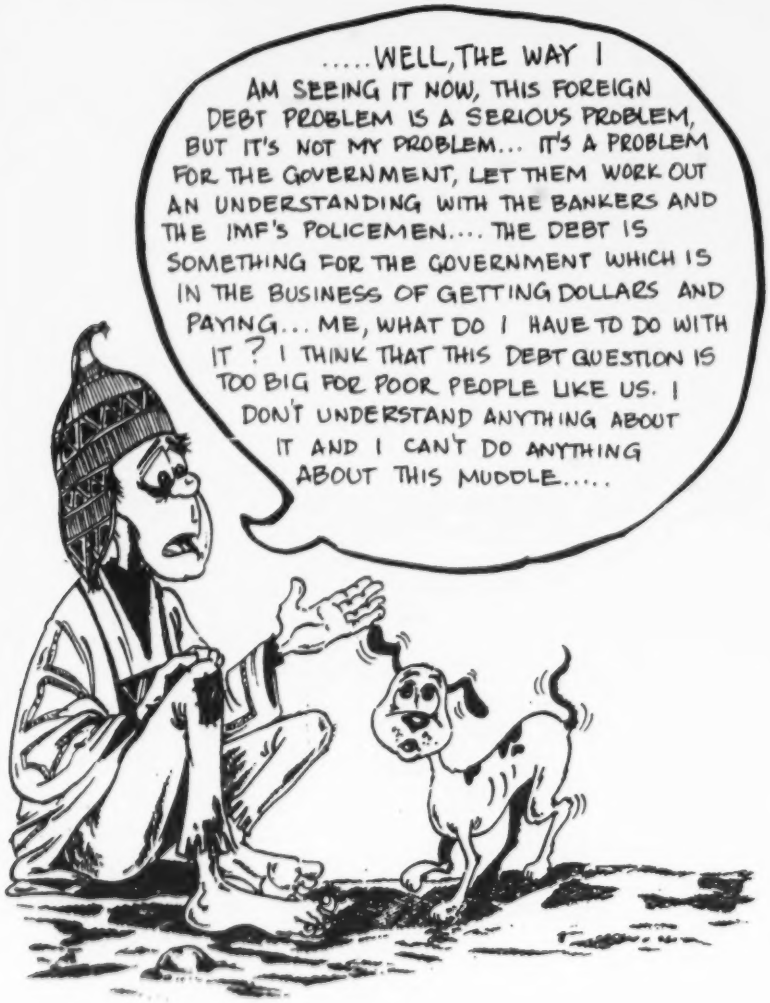


THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

WAS FOUNDED IN 1945 NOT SO MUCH TO BE A DEBT-COLLECTOR AS TO GIVE SOME ORDER TO THE WORLD ECONOMY AND TO PREVENT THE BIG FISH FROM EATING THE LITTLE..... BUT THE IMF HAS GRADUALLY BEEN CONVERTED INTO WHAT IT IS TODAY, AN INSTRUMENT TOTALLY CONTROLLED BY THE RICH, WHICH POLICES THEIR BUSINESS AFFAIRS AND HELPS THE BIG FISH DEVOUR THE LITTLE ONES....

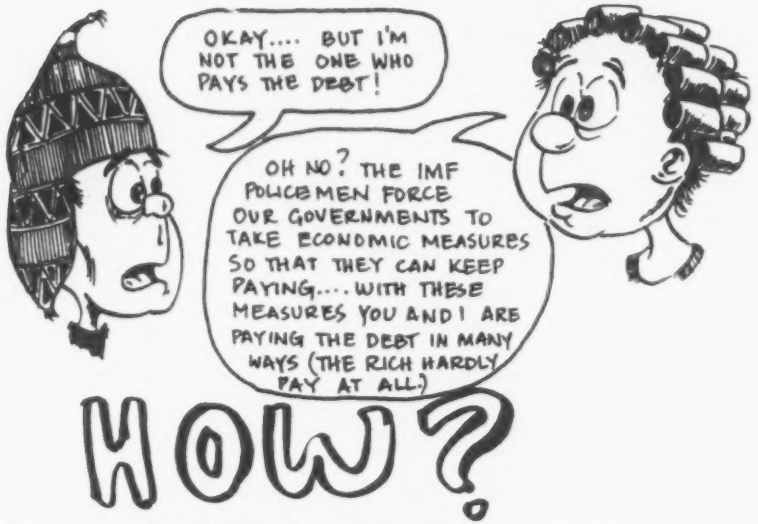
THE IMF GIVES OR TAKES AWAY LOANS, CALLS IN DEBTS AND GETS INTO OUR COUNTRIES TO ORGANIZE OUR ECONOMY, FOLLOWING A RECIPE WHICH NEVER FAVOURS THE DEBTORS AND ALWAYS DEFENDS THE INTERESTS OF THE BANKERS. THE IMF HAS ACCOMPLICES IN EACH ONE OF OUR COUNTRIES. IT IS AN INSTITUTION THAT IS NOT AT ALL DEMOCRATIC.

WHO PAYS THE FOREIGN DEBT?


.....WELL, THE WAY I AM SEEING IT NOW, THIS FOREIGN DEBT PROBLEM IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM, BUT IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM... IT'S A PROBLEM FOR THE GOVERNMENT, LET THEM WORK OUT AN UNDERSTANDING WITH THE BANKERS AND THE IMF'S POLICEMEN.... THE DEBT IS SOMETHING FOR THE GOVERNMENT WHICH IS IN THE BUSINESS OF GETTING DOLLARS AND PAYING... ME, WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO WITH IT ? I THINK THAT THIS DEBT QUESTION IS TOO BIG FOR POOR PEOPLE LIKE US. I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING ABOUT IT AND I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT THIS MUDDLE.....

.....BUT THOSE WHO SAY THEY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ARE THE ONES WHO KNOW MOST ABOUT THE FOREIGN DEBT

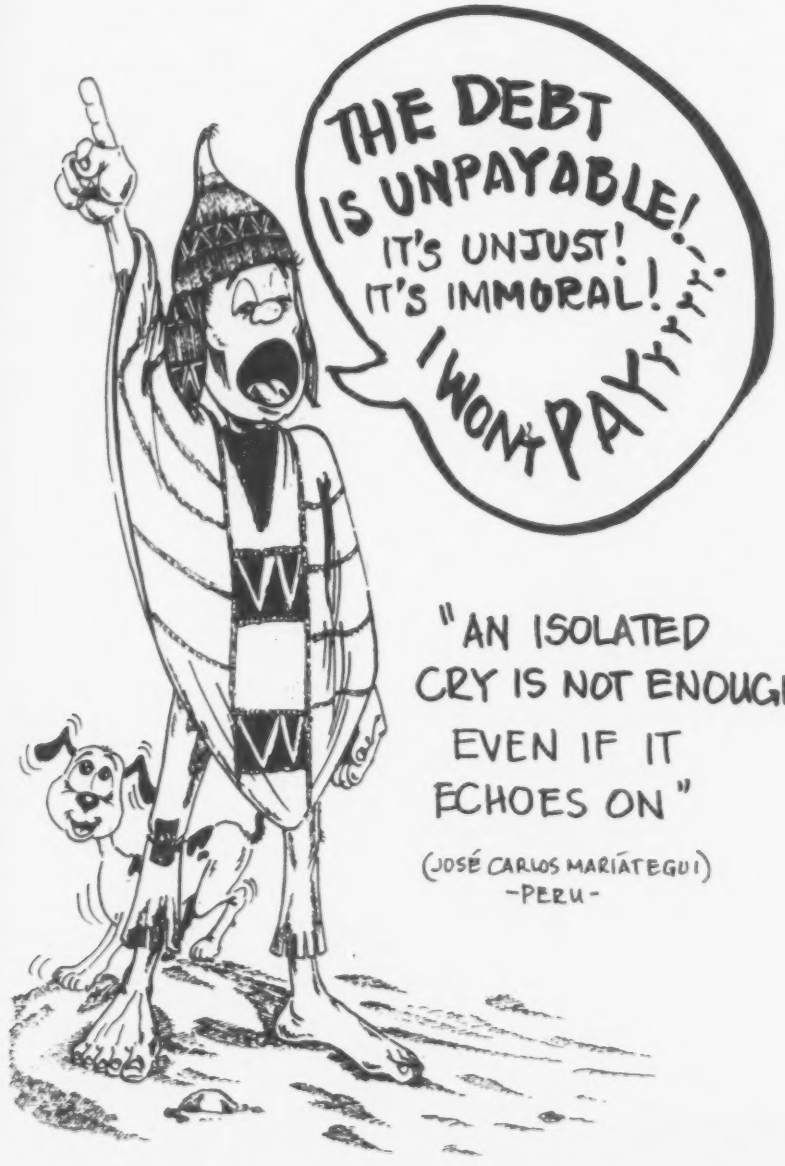
BECAUSE THEY ARE THE ONES WHO PAY IT EACH DAY.....


OKAY.... BUT I'M NOT THE ONE WHO PAYS THE DEBT!
OH NO? THE IMF POLICEMEN FORCE OUR GOVERNMENTS TO TAKE ECONOMIC MEASURES SO THAT THEY CAN KEEP PAYING.... WITH THESE MEASURES YOU AND I ARE PAYING THE DEBT IN MANY WAYS (THE RICH HARDLY PAY AT ALL.)
HOW?

THE RISE IN PRICES OF FOOD,
TRANSPORT, CLOTHING AND ALL THE BASICS
HAS A LOT TO DO WITH THE FOREIGN DEBT
SINCE IMPORTS ARE PAID IN DOLLARS
AND MOST DOLLARS ARE DEDICATED TO PAYING THE DEBT.
CUTS IN IMPORTS ARE FORCED ON US
AND THIS AFFECTS CONSUMPTION, CREATING SCARCITIES
AND MAKING THINGS MORE AND MORE COSTLY.....

GROWING UNEMPLOYMENT, THE CRISIS OUR NATIONAL
INDUSTRIES ARE IN, FROZEN SALARIES
HAVE A LOT TO DO WITH THE FOREIGN DEBT.
IF WE HAVE TO REDUCE IMPORTS
AND PROMOTE EXPORTS TO GET DOLLARS
TO PAY OFF THE FOREIGN DEBT
MANY FACTORIES WILL GO BANKRUPT

THE LACK OF SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRES
HAS A LOT TO DO WITH THE FOREIGN DEBT.
DOLLARS ARE DECREASING AND THE FEW
THAT EXIST GO MORE AND MORE TO PAY THE DEBT
AND ALMOST NOTHING IS LEFT TO INVEST
FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MAJORITY



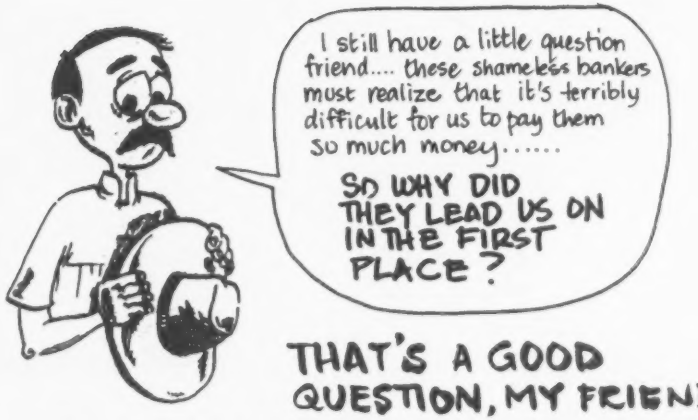
"AN ISOLATED CRY IS NOT ENOUGH EVEN IF IT ECHOES ON"

(JOSÉ CARLOS MARIÁTEGUI)
-PERU-

And if we don't pay?
They won't give us more loans.
They give us loans now so that we are able to keep paying interest on the debt.....
And if they don't give us more loans?
If they punish us with a blockade?
But if they don't give us more loans... how will we get out of this situation?
They can't blockade the whole continent. They need us, they need our natural resources, they need to sell us their products. They have to deal with us.....
We have to unite, if we are united we'll get out of this together. We can borrow more from each other.
And if they don't sell things to us anymore?
Don't worry. We'll buy and sell among ourselves. In Latin America we have everything. Throughout the Third World we have everything we need to live, from a file, to the most complex factory, from mangoes to nuclear energy...
But isn't that impossible...?

"LET'S DO THE IMPOSSIBLE TODAY. AND TACKLE WHAT'S DIFFICULT TOMORROW"

(SIMÓN BOLÍVAR)


I still have a little question friend.... these shameless bankers must realize that it's terribly difficult for us to pay them so much money.....
SO WHY DID THEY LEAD US ON IN THE FIRST PLACE?

THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION, MY FRIEND,

BECAUSE HERE'S THE HEART OF THE MATTER

- THEY KNEW WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PAY THEM
- THEY KNEW WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN
- BUT THEY THINK ONLY OF THEIR INTERESTS AND DO ONLY WHAT SUITS THEM.

TO RESOLVE THEIR OWN DEBTS THEY NEEDED TO PUT US IN DEBT

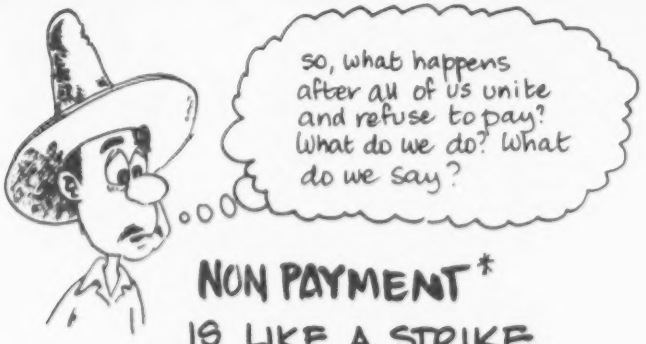
THEY NEED OUR MONEY TO IMPROVE AND SUSTAIN THEIR ECONOMIES. THEY NEED TO HAVE OUR ECONOMIES DEPENDENT ON THEIRS AND SERVICING THEIRS.

Take note!

AN INDIVIDUAL GETS A LOAN WHEN IT'S CLEAR THAT HE OR SHE CAN REPAY IT.
IN THE CASE OF A COUNTRY, THEY CONTINUE TO LOAN PAST THE NATION'S ABILITY TO PAY.... THIS WAY THEY ENSURE THAT THE COUNTRY WILL HAVE TO PAY WITH ITS SOVEREIGNTY.....

Extracts from 'Latin America's Eternal Debt' by Tayacan '87

SO WHAT DO WE DO NEXT?



NON PAYMENT* IS LIKE A STRIKE

TO FORCE THEM TO
ABOLISH THE DEBT
TO ANNUL IT
TO FORGET IT
TO ERASE IT

CANCELLATION OF THE DEBT IS JUST THE FIRST STEP

NON PAYMENT* WILL BE THE WAY TO FORCE THEM TO THE BARGAINING TABLE.....

To talk about what?
About the debt NO! About the NIEO!!!
*PAY NEITHER THE CAPITAL NOR THE INTEREST
$
NIEO = New International Economic Order

Drawings by Manuel Guillén

It's not just LATIN AMERICA, it's all the impoverished countries of Africa, of Asia of the THIRD WORLD that have demanded a NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER But if we don't solve the problem of the debt first - there will be NO N.I.E.O.
So when we eliminate the debt is when the struggle really begins.....
It will be difficult. The rich are selfish and we are not unified
MAMA! Is this fight for me?
IMF GET OUT!
NIEO
LATIN AMERICA ASIA AND AFRICA UNITED WILL WIN!!!
THE CAPITALIST DEBT IS TERRORISM
DONT QUIT-This struggle is a broad one
SIOSI
NEITHER RICH NOR POOR!
THEY WILL NOT SUCCEED!
THERE IS NO DEMOCRACY WITH THE DEBT
THEY WILL NOT PAY!
GOD DOESN'T WANT ETERNAL DEBT
"LETS FIGHT BECAUSE THE TEARS FROM A DEFEAT ARE BETTER THAN THE SHAME OF NOT HAVING PUT UP A FIGHT" (grat ti - São Paulo)
THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE DEBT IS A STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE (for a New International Economic Order) IT'S A STRUGGLE FOR UNITY (for the economic integration of Latin America and the Third World)

- If you are a factory worker, what does your workplace produce?
- What does your country need to bring into the country (import) in order for your factory to produce? (e.g., vehicles, machinery, spare parts, diesel, etc.)
- How does your country get the money to bring things like petrol or machinery into the country?
- What happens when the country needs more of these imported things (vehicles, petrol, machinery, drugs, paper) than it can pay for?
- What happens when a country gets into debt?

Have the groups come back together and report on their discussions.

2. Brainstorm on present knowledge of IMF

Pass out slips of paper and have participants write down their answer to the following questions:

- What effect has the IMF structural adjustments policy had on our community?

(Many countries adopted an IMF-sponsored structural adjustment programme (SAP) but call it something different. Mozambique, for example, calls its IMF-sponsored programme an economic recovery programme. Be sure you can supply minimum facts about whether an IMF-sponsored programme is being carried out or not.)

Collect the papers and have some participants begin to read them out while other participants write them up on a blackboard or flip chart. There may be a wide range of information. If the ideas of the

participants about the IMF are not very precise, don't worry. These are tough subjects, and the idea is mainly to establish that there's lots we don't know about the IMF and structural adjustments.

3. Group study of external debt and the IMF in Latin America

Ask the group if they think a comic book could be useful in explaining some of the complicated questions about the role of the IMF, foreign exchange and foreign debt. After hearing people's opinions, explain that in Latin America, there has been a lot of talk about the external debt and the IMF but most people don't understand much about it. Popular educators have been asked to prepare materials to make it possible for ordinary people to understand the role of the IMF and structural adjustments. One group in Nicaragua has written a comic book to try to explain.

Divide the participants in groups of 4 to 6 participants and pass out pages of the comic book, *The Eternal Debt*. Explain that the book is divided into three sections:

- External debt and the role of the IMF - pages 1-19
- History of the debt - pages 20-29
- Current strategies of debtor countries - pages 30-45

Have the groups read the pages of the comic together, clarifying each other's doubts and questions as they go. As they are reading through the book, ask the participants to be thinking whether the explanations make sense for what is happening in Africa? In countries like Canada?

4. Reflection on the role of the IMF

Ask the participants what they have learned from their reading about how the IMF works. Questions might include the following:

- What do we mean by foreign debt?
- Does our country owe money to other richer countries?
- Foreign debt is payable in what currency?
- How do we get the money to pay our debt in that currency?
- Is the debt question just for governments to deal with or does it touch on the lives of ordinary citizens?

5. Analyzing the local impact of IMF policies

Ask participants to work with the person next to them and share their experiences of the effects of "structural adjustment programmes" promoted by the IMF. Questions could include the following:

- What impact has the structural adjustments programme had on urban wage earners? on rural producers? on women and children?
- How does the structural adjustments programme affect health and education?

After ten to fifteen minutes, have the groups of two merge with each other to form groups of four to share their ideas for another ten minutes. Ask the group of four to share their discussions with the larger group.

The group may decide to call in a resource person to deepen these discussions. If so, it might be preferable to do this in an interview format. Have the group prepare their questions and present their own observations about what is happening to people they know. Otherwise the person coming may feel quite comfortable in an "expert" role, thus reinforcing the group members' sense of their own "economic illiteracy."

6. Comic book formats for critical questioning

Discuss the comic book format with the participants. The discussion could include the following questions:

- Did you like the comic book format? Why? Why not?
- Did the comic book style make the material seem less difficult to understand?
- Some people argue that people in a particular country aren't used to cartoons so they should be avoided. As an educator, do you agree?
- If people are not used to cartoons/comic books, should they be introduced into our education work? Why? How? Why not?

CREATING A COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Methodological march and a workshop planning guide from Nicaragua as ways to "Think process!"

Background: Part of our group participated in a methodology workshop organized by CEPA (Rural Education and Promotion Centre), a popular education group in Nicaragua that had worked in rural communities even before liberation. CEPA is part of a network of popular education groups throughout Central America called "Alforja". Alforja has been a pioneer in theorizing the work going on in popular education. The CEPA seminar was for people in various public sector enterprises responsible for training in their respective workplaces. Thus there was a need to take the trainees through a process of popular education and then use that common experience as the point of reference for how to do popular education. In other words, reflection on methodology is a key aspect of training!

Tracing our organizational history. Systematizing our work.

The seminar began with the participants describing the work they did in their respective enterprises, and reflecting on their successes and their difficulties. All of this was put up on flip charts for each company or department. The middle section of the workshop included activities to deepen the understanding of the common problems raised by the participants about training activities in their workplaces. These ranged from sociodrama to a mock courtroom scene in which "vertical" training was put on trial. The final days of the workshop had each participant planning strategies of what to do when they got back to work.

Each phase of work had flip charts to capture the themes under discussion. All the groups we visited in Nicaragua used flip charts constantly. Rarely did this mean a pad of newsprint on a stand with coloured pens available. More often it meant big sheets of brown paper with chalk substituting for pens. What was important, however, was that it functioned as a technique for recording the discussion that went on in small groups. The sense of group ownership of ideas, of producing a tangible product out of group discussions, of having a collective memory of what went on, were all important. Equally important, the thankless tasks of taking notes for your small group or of reporting back verbally were both avoided.

At the end of the CEPA workshop, it was possible to put the flip charts all up in chronological order and have a kind of "methodological march" to trace out the steps in the process. From this, it was clear that the seminar had, in fact, gone through the sequence thought to be fundamental by popular educators:

- starting with what people know and where they are
- deepening the understanding and analysis
- returning to action

Flip charts and a workshop planning guide as a way to "think process"!

Objectives:

1. To reflect on ways to make more effective use of flip charts
2. To introduce a "methodological march" using flip charts as a way of looking at the methodological flow during a workshop
3. To introduce a workshop planning guide

When to use this activity:

These activities should be used at least three quarters of the way through a seminar or workshop, at a point where there is a group process stretched over several days to look back on. Flip charts can be used from the beginning of the seminar/workshop as a familiar tool. There should be some care to make sure that all significant moments of activity are recorded on these flip charts so as to build up a record of the process for later reflection.

Theoretical significance:

Popular educators are concerned not just with the contents of their work but with the process or methodology. The activities of a seminar or workshop are not just a random selection of interesting things to do. They should have an internal logic. The starting point is from the experiences of the participants, a first phase that draws on what the participants bring to the workshop or seminar from their own work situations and lives. The second phase is one of identifying some of the issues posed in phase one and deepening these issues. This may take many forms, from more in-depth discussions using the resources already in the group to drawing on other kinds of resources, people, films, videos, field visits, texts, etc. The third phase is an action phase, looking back at the issues raised in phase one, but now informed by the new material, ways of analysis and understandings developed during the second phase, so that phase three results in new actions and strategies.

A. Methodological march using flip charts

Materials needed:

Flip charts recording all of the previous activities of the workshop or seminar

Steps:

1. Individual or collective march through the process

There are several ways to use flip charts for the methodological march:

- ask an individual participant to take the group through the various moments in the workshop

WORKSHOP PLANNING GUIDE

Theme: Participants:

Time: Date:

Objectives:

Logic	Objective	Theme	Activity	Procedure	Resources	Time

- ask the whole group to walk around the room, looking at the sequence of activities captured in the flip charts
- facilitate a discussion about the workshop, asking what did we do first, why, etc.

Carry out this activity according to the size and characteristics of the group and how familiar people are with workshop planning and the methodology of popular education. It is important to focus on both the content and process of each session. Participants should see the process in terms of the three broad phases:

- starting with what people know/where they are
- deepening the information and analysis
- returning to action

2. Analyzing the methodological march

Ask the participants to identify how particular activities have contributed to each phase, what worked well, what was not so effective. In addition to looking at the objectives for particular activities, make sure there is an opportunity to analyze the larger flow. Did the workshop start with what people knew, take them through a phase of deepening their understanding and then focus on action?

B. Workshop planning guide

Materials needed: Blank workshop planning guides

Steps:

1. Introducing workshop planning guide

Introduce the workshop planning guide either by circulating copies of the guide or by writing up the headings on the board or flip chart and having the participants use a blank sheet of paper to make their own workshop planning guides. Go through the various columns on the guide, identifying the kind of information that goes in each one.

2. Filling in workshop planning guide

Ask the participants to fill in the guide, step by step, on the blackboard with reference to their own training course or workshop, using a previous day's activities. In this way, points that are not clear about how to work with the guide should become apparent.

3. Planning a training workshop

Ask the participants to divide into groups of 3 to 5. Have the groups plan a two-day training event for a group relevant to their own local context such as literacy teachers in a cooperative movement or district level literacy staff, etc. An example is included, but it is only that - do not use it as a model.

4. Sharing the workshop plans

Ask each group to present its plan to the plenary, explaining the activities and the logic of the process. Suggestions for alterations may be accepted by the planning group or rejected. The important thing is for the group to begin to see why a particular sequence of activities is planned.

WORKSHOP PLANNING GUIDE

Participants: 25 District facilitators (Murrupula) Theme: Quarterly self-evaluation
Date: March 12/89 Time: 8 hours
Objectives: Evaluate 3rd quarter and plan activities for final quarter

Logic	Objective	Theme	Activity	Procedure	Resources	Time
Start with what people know/ where they are	Old and new instructors to get to know each other		Pairs to introduce each other	• Have people talk to someone they don't know for 3 mins. • Have pairs present each other to the group		20 min
	Identify three successes during quarter's activities	Evaluate successes	Discussion starter 2-4-8	• Have people identify three positive aspects of their work in groups of two, four and eight		15 min.
				• Ask groups of eight to report to total group/write on flipchart	flip chart pens masking tape	25 min.
				• Analyze "why"		30 min.
	Use same process for difficulties	Evaluate difficulties				30 min.
Deepen analysis	Build skill in facilitating generative word discussions	Facilitating discussions	Role play	• Do role plays with discussions	Slide or photo projector	1 hour
	Energize group		game	• Explain and play "Lifeboats"		20 min.
	Above cont'd	"	Video	• Project video of literacy class • Decode video	Video monitor	1 hour
			LUNCH	BREAK		1 hour
Return to action	Energize		Game	• Brainstorm on best new idea for facilitating	Paper slips	15 min.
	Plan future literacy classes	"	Groups/plenary	• Prepare future teaching sessions	Teaching materials	90 min.

LOOKING FOR THE PROBLEMATIC POINTS IN OUR LITERACY WORK

A methodology of internal evaluation from Nicaragua

GRENADA REGION ZONAL MEETING AUGUST 1985			
	Successes	Difficulties	Causes
Regional Training	4 courses held	Poor food	Funds arrived late
Zonal Training			
Supervision			
Information/ Analysis flow			
Structure/ organization			

Background: The two months we spent in Nicaragua coincided with the 5th Anniversary of the Nicaraguan Literacy Crusade and a period of reflection by Nicaraguans on their experiences in popular education. Popular education as used by the Nicaraguans seemed to have multiple layers of meaning. At least three were fundamental. First, popular education meant education accessible to the popular classes and not the elite. Second, it meant a process of education profoundly popular and democratic in character. The actual teaching learning process was meant to be dynamic, leaving behind authoritarian classrooms and establishing new relationships between teachers and students. Third, popular education was linked integrally with the broader social movement for change. Classroom experiences were meant to equip learners with new tools for analysis and activism, a new capacity to have a voice in community and workplace struggles. "The process is the real teacher." Variants of this phrase were frequently heard.

A series of seminars took place during our visit to Nicaragua to think through what had been accomplished during the five years. The first seminar brought together people from all branches of education along with people from the Sandinista Front, different ministries and the various mass organizations (women, farm workers, peasants, workers, youth). Also invited were a handful of internationalists who had collaborated actively in the Crusade and original follow-up programmes. This first seminar was followed up by a regional seminar and then, during our stay, an operational seminar to look at the implications for adult education. Other sections of the Ministry of Education, including general education, were also expected to organize follow-up seminars.

Minister of Education Fernando Cardenal opened the seminar. He reminded the participants that popular education had been designated as the most important aspect of the work of the Ministry of Education during 1985, of even higher priority than the urgent issues of teacher shortages and expansion. He went on to say that the mark of a popular process is that ordinary people speak, criticize and participate. "Vertical education is purely to transmit from above. Popular education believes in the capacity, creativity and honesty of the people." He challenged them to find ways to do popular education not only to create political militants but also to create people with a sound technical base, able to continue their education and to contribute to developing the country.

What made Minister Cardenal's urging the more dramatic was the Nicaraguan context, a tiny country under siege, educators on the front lines, surely a time for caution. Yet this was not the mood. The minister urged the educators not to wait until everything was clearly defined before setting out on new

paths. He reminded them that one of the truths established during their long struggle to overthrow the Somoza regime also had current resonance. "Walking, we make the way." He urged them to be daring in the solutions they came up with and to be dedicated. "Fifteen years from now, your children may turn to you and say, "Where were you in 1985 when the contras were killing 'popular teachers' and kidnapping education brigades?" My hope is that you will be able to say, "I was there working. I was untiring. I didn't sell out. I didn't give up."

The methods the Nicaraguan educators used for evaluating their work suggested an approach for a variety of training and evaluation activities. Whether in extended operational seminars, meant to map out clear guidelines for the forthcoming years in adult education programming, or one-day seminars at local level, this method allowed simultaneous consideration of many interacting factors.

In one discussion group the analysis of the "problematic trends" in each of the eight principle aspects of literacy work led to the conclusion that there were two main contradictions in literacy work. First there was the lack of a clear definition of the model of adult education being followed, with a global definition of its programme. Second, and closely related, there was the problem of a strong tendency towards formalization. The Basic Popular Education programme was balanced somewhere between the formal education system with its stress on structure and the broad experience of popular education with its stress on participation. The strong tendencies towards formalization within the Basic Popular Education programme were seen to be pushing it towards the formal system and making it unable to respond to the dynamic of the popular classes and the diversity of Nicaraguan reality.

A methodology of internal evaluation from Nicaragua

Objectives:

1. To analyze our work in literacy/popular education within a critical framework
2. To develop an evaluation methodology that places our work within a dynamic rather than static context, shaped by the impact of multiple factors

When to use this activity:

This activity could be used effectively at two points in a workshop-seminar. If the event brings together people who are already working in literacy/popular education, it could be used at the beginning of the event as a way of systematizing the reflections on people's present practices. If the event is a training course for newcomers that stretches over several days or weeks, this activity could be presented towards the end of the course as a tool for evaluating the course itself. Having used this tool to evaluate the course, the participants should be encouraged to look at this as a possible tool for evaluating their own work.

Theoretical significance:

Evaluation is a key aspect of ongoing work in popular education. It is closely related to another necessity, systematization. These are difficult because the aims of popular education, new capacities for critical thinking, solidarity, collective action and engagement in social change, are not easy to measure. Also if we speak of a new role for the teacher, not as arbiter of the "correct answer" determining who passes or fails, but as facilitator of a dynamic learning process equipping people for social action, we cannot then give the teacher the power to evaluate.

Literacy programmes like the one in Nicaragua which promote a process of popular education but also offer qualifications that have equivalents in the formal school system, pose even more complex questions of evaluation. Nicaraguan educators were struggling with the dilemma of organizing a process of popular literacy meant to equip people to be activists in a process of social change and then analyzing the success of the literacy programme through exams that measured only language and math skills. But how do you measure a new capacity for solidarity or creativity or community initiative? And how do you distinguish between individual evaluation and evaluation of the programme's impact on collective action for social change? And why should the facilitator suddenly take on the power of the evaluator anyway?

One partial but important path forward is through collective evaluations like those common in the Nicaragua programme. A collective process of evaluation allows the participants involved at different levels in the programme to give their ideas of the various factors involved, what worked, what did not.

Materials needed:

Flip charts with markers, a blackboard or brown paper and chalk.

Steps: **1. Defining the principle aspects of our work in literacy**

Ask the workshop participants to divide into groups of 4 to 6 to discuss their successes, what they have accomplished in their work over the past year. Depending on the composition of the participants, you may group people by region or by type of literacy programme. Have them analyze the following areas and any others relevant to their specific context:

- Participation
- Coverage and results
- Relation to the reality of the learner
- Structures
- "Popular teachers"
- Training
- Curriculum contents
- Types of literacy programme

Within each aspect, look at the multiple factors at work. From these multiple factors have the group decide on the main problems in each area of work. Have the small groups return to report on their discussions to the plenary.

2. Selecting out the fundamental problem areas of our work

Divide into small groups again and have the groups look at the principle difficulties and negative factors in their work. Have the groups select out the central problem in each aspect of their work and look at some ways of how to overcome it.

Join the groups together again to report to the plenary.

3. Analyzing how to resolve the fundamental problems

Work either in plenary or first in small groups and then in plenary to analyze the fundamental problems in more depth. Try to determine an order of priority for the broad problematic tendencies, e.g. formalization, distance from the reality of the learner. Having identified broad problematic tendencies, try applying them to each factor of your work, e.g. how tendencies to formalization affect participation, training, contents, etc.

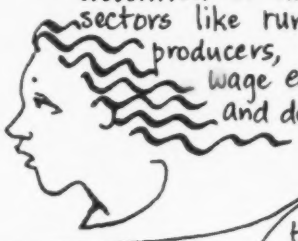
WORKSHOP ASSESSING 5 YEARS OF POPULAR EDUCATION HELD IN LOS NUVENS, NICARAGUA, SEPT. 1985.

+ Holding this seminar with full participation from education plus others is highly positive.
- But there's been no definition of the forms and content of participation for different sectors....
- And the structure doesn't allow active participation at the base
d. Participation
b. Coverage and results
+ Impressive, but numbers in post-literacy are still low.
- Lack of strategy for giving specific attention to different sectors

c. Relation with reality

+We've tried to link more closely with the reality of the learner.

-But not with enough attention to distinct sectors like rural producers, urban wage earners and defense.



d. Structures

+Despite the war, we've managed to maintain the structures of the literacy programme.

-Ministry of Education tends to standardise. But popular education isn't formal. There's a conflict.

e. Popular teachers

+We've still got 'popular teachers' volunteering. A whole brigade has just trained in Cuba. Now they'll teach in local schools.

-We have no educational strategy for training and maintaining 'popular teachers'.

f. Training

+Training is going on in the regions. We're documenting these experiences to share more broadly.

-Training programmes haven't responded to the broad problems and specific needs of the 'popular teachers'.

Marnie Bruyn-Meyer

g. Contents

+A curriculum has been drafted for a non-formal adult education programme!

-There's no strategy for flexible curriculum responsive to different sectors.

h. Types of Literacy Programme

-There is no understanding of illiteracy in the educational system

+We've introduced open literacy. People now work in twos and threes, in homes, whenever the learners have time.

FROM LIFEBOATS TO SECRET ADMIRER

Participatory techniques to energize group work

Background: In a number of places we visited, especially in Nicaragua, we came across techniques for energizing groups through games or exercises. These techniques were used both to deepen the analysis of content and to build group process, opening up the flow of energy and interaction between all members of the group. They served to engage people in learning in a way that gave them a sense of ownership of the group's insights. They also created an atmosphere of confidence in the group process enabling group tasks to be accomplished within an atmosphere of mutual support.

In Nicaragua we participated in a week-long operational workshop, part of a series of workshops to evaluate five years of experiences of popular education. The activities for the sixty participants throughout the week included several of the participatory techniques explained below. The workshop itself dealt with very troubling questions, the war, strategies to respond to economic destabilization, discussions about how to correct the tendency to formalize adult education. Interspersed with the heavy agenda were various "energizers." The after-lunch slump was dealt with through quick games like "Lifeboats" (described below) or another game called "Elephants and Giraffes." In the latter people formed a large circle. The leader explained how to join hands in groups of three to make the shape of an elephant or giraffe. One combination of arms and legs shaped the trunk and ears of the elephant. Another combination shaped the neck and long legs of the giraffe. The leader walked about pointing to different people in the circle. When pointed to, you had to join hands quickly with the people on either side of you to form the shape of whichever animal was indicated. Needless to say, this was all done with much laughter and commotion.

Mid-way through the seminar, "Secret Admirer" was introduced. Groups that work together all the time can get stale. People often maintain their old circles of friends within a workshop or stick with their regional delegation in the free time, thereby missing the opportunity to make new friends. The "Secret Admirer" exercise tended to provide a whole different flow of energy, and intrigue, into the workshop process. We all wrote our names and one thing we liked on a piece of paper. These were placed in a hat. We then selected names, and became the secret admirer of the person whose name we picked. Suddenly each of us became intent on expressing our admiration for someone else. We were also recipients of little tokens of admiration from the secret friend who had chosen our names. Who doesn't like to have an admirer who showers you with little surprises and messages of support about the interesting things you've said, how much (s)he likes your group's contribution to the plenary, how weary you must be after a hard day's work?

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When to use this activity: Participatory techniques can be used for introductions at the beginning of a workshop or seminar to break the ice and to open up the theme for discussion. We saw them used for group building and participation, sometimes loosely linked to the content and sometimes totally separate from it. And we saw them used purely as energizers, breaking a moment of early afternoon drowsiness or a particularly tense or concentrated discussion.

The best way to introduce these activities is to use them! On the other hand, it is important that they be seen not as techniques per se but as part of a larger group-building process. Include some of these energizers as part of any workshop plan. At some point towards the end of a workshop to train trainers,

reflect on the techniques and what was accomplished by them, analyzing with the group whether they worked and how they made group members feel. At this time, additional games and exercises can also be introduced.

Theoretical significance:

Some of the techniques suggested here are designed to meet "content" objectives, others are meant to strengthen the "process" of the workshop and to build up participation. At some points it is useful to distinguish between the two, but in the flow of a workshop, the two tend often to be integrally related. For example, a participatory technique like the **Discussion Starter 2-4-8** described below results in a collective opening up of the topic under discussion. This creates a sense of collective "ownership" of what the group is working on in terms of content and makes people feel competent and individually creative, thus providing a positive flow of energy through the group.

Opening up a group discussion is always difficult. Who is going to break the ice? Men tend to speak up before women. Often those with more education have the confidence to put forward their ideas, while those with less education hold back. And of course, individual temperament comes in, with natural "talkers" and those who tend to be "shy." The **Brainstorming** variant suggested below is actually done with paper which provides a "shower of ideas" offered individually and read out anonymously. This rules out any self-censorship from fear of one's own answer not being adequate. It also side-steps deference to the "teacher" as the arbiter of what is a good idea or not.

Life Boats was another simple technique that worked well. Groups go through natural rises and falls in rhythm and energy. Some exercises are designed to animate the group, shifting from a low energy to a high energy state.

One danger with the energizers is that they are often the most memorable part of a process of popular education. A casual observer can come to the erroneous conclusion that popular education is only group dynamics, full of games and exercises, a question of techniques. It is important, therefore, that energizers be understood in terms of their fundamental objectives, building participation and strengthening the group process.

A. Discussion Starter 2-4-8

Objectives:

1. To build group interaction
2. To create a mechanism in which the theme under discussion emerges from the group, providing some sense of group ownership of the process

When to use:

Use this participatory technique at the point of opening up a topic for discussion. It also works surprisingly well in more formal situations with speakers and large numbers of participants. Without having to move the group around, it is possible for all participants to put out their initial thoughts about the theme or issue under discussion.

Materials needed:

Blackboard or flip chart

Steps:

1. Working in Twos

Have the participants work with the person next to them on the topic under discussion. It could be anything from media images of Africa to the role of education in social transformation. The pairs should work for about five minutes. This step is noisy but it is well worth the hubbub. It is the noise of participation where nobody feels inhibited about speaking.

2. Working in Fours - and Eights

Have the groups of two form into groups of four, sharing their ideas for another five minutes. After that, the groups of four can join with another to make groups of eight. Usually by this time, you have both some overlap and some deepening of ideas.

3. Report Back

Ask for a report back from each group of eight, putting up the ideas on a flip-chart or on the blackboard. After fifteen minutes in groups of two, four and eight, all participants have had a chance to put forward

their ideas. The group members have thus contributed in a way that can give everybody some sense of ownership in the discussion and provide some guidelines to a speaker about what points to stress.

B. Life Boats

Objectives: 1. To energize the group

When to use: This should be used at a point of low energy in a workshop as a means of re-energizing the group.

Materials needed: A facilitator to be "captain" and direct the evacuation into the lifeboats!

Steps:

1. Setting the scene

Ask all participants to stand up. The "captain" explains that because of the terrible storm that has come up, it will be necessary to evacuate the ship. The "captain" also explains that the life boats are now being lowered but that they have capacity for different numbers of people.

2. Evacuating the ship

The "captain" announces that life boats for five are ready. At this point people cluster into groups of five with the people immediately around them. The "captain" invents more news about the storm and the conditions of the ship and intersperses this with announcements of lifeboats being ready for eight, for three, for seven, etc. By the end, after much confusion and laughter, the participants have jumped in and out of clusters with various combinations of people and have much more energy to proceed with the next activity.

C. Secret Admirers

Objectives: 1. To build group spirit and interaction
2. To focus attention on how to contribute to a group process

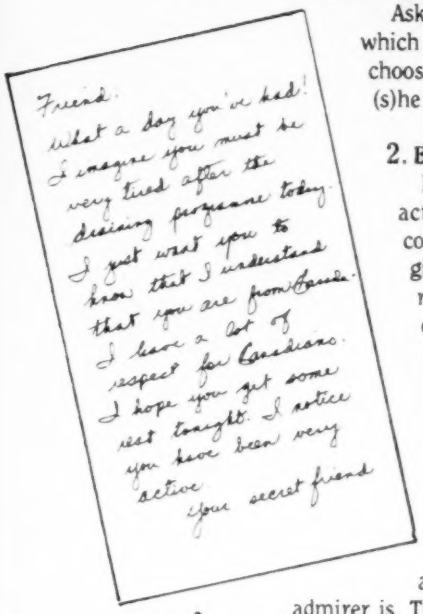
When to use: This works best in a longer workshop as a way of introducing some new dynamics and interactions along the way. It is good to have it spread over several meals and evenings so as to allow the admirers time to learn something about the person they admire and opportunity to invent secret ways to communicate with them.

Materials needed: Papers and pencils
Hat or other container
Mail box

Steps:

1. Choosing someone to admire

Ask all the participants to write their names and one thing they like on small pieces of paper which are then put in a hat. The hat is then passed around for people to choose a name. (If you choose your own, try again.) Each person becomes the secret admirer of the person whose name (s)he has chosen.


Friend:
What a day you've had!
I imagine you must be
very tired after the
dressing programme today.
I just want you to
know that I understand
that you are from Canada.
I have a lot of
respect for Canadians.
I hope you get some
rest tonight. I notice
you have been very
active
your secret friend

Note from Judith's 'Secret Admirer'

2. Becoming a secret admirer

Explain to the participants that for the next few days they should try to follow closely the actions of the person whose name they have chosen. They can invent secret ways to communicate with this person through little gifts, messages or intermediaries, all without giving away their own identity. A mail box can be set up for messages. These messages can relate to the workshop itself, words of praise for an idea presented in the morning's debate or sympathy for having had to work so late to prepare something for a plenary. The message can give a broad or subtle hint about the identity of the admirer. It can also be anything that is just plain fun!

The facilitators of the workshop should join in the Secret Admirer game. Depending on how quickly the group picks up on the game, the facilitators can play an active role in making suggestions about different kinds of gifts and messages of support.

3. Secret admirers revealed!

On the final day, have the secret admirers reveal themselves. Lots will be known already or at least suspected. People can be asked to indicate who they think their secret admirer is. The person named then confirms or denies. In the case of denial, the real secret admirer identifies him/herself. Once all those who want to guess have done so, the remaining secret admirers tell who it is they have been admiring.

D. Brainstorming

Objectives:

1. To create a rapid flow of ideas from all members of the group
2. To do so in a way that encourages full participation from all participants

When to use:

This is a good introduction to a discussion theme with an exercise that encourages everyone to give their initial thoughts on a subject. Whether done orally or with pieces of paper as described below, one of the characteristics of brainstorming is that ideas should be thrown out freely. There should be no self-censorship, rejecting an idea as not being "interesting," "viable financially," "acceptable to the Ministry," etc. Nor should there be any critical evaluation from colleagues in the first phase; often real creativity comes in a climate of playing freely with ideas. The most fantastic or outrageous ideas put out in jest are often the starting points for what, slightly re-worked, turns out to be a truly innovative activity or plan.

Brainstorming with paper is particularly good when you have a group in which some people do not feel comfortable participating. Putting an idea on an anonymous piece of paper instead of having to get up the courage to voice it frees some participants to contribute. This technique can be used to get ideas for anything, from planning a literacy fund-raising event to more abstract discussions like the one we encountered in Nicaragua, where people were asked to do a one sentence description of "what education should be in our revolutionary process."

Materials needed:

Paper and pencils

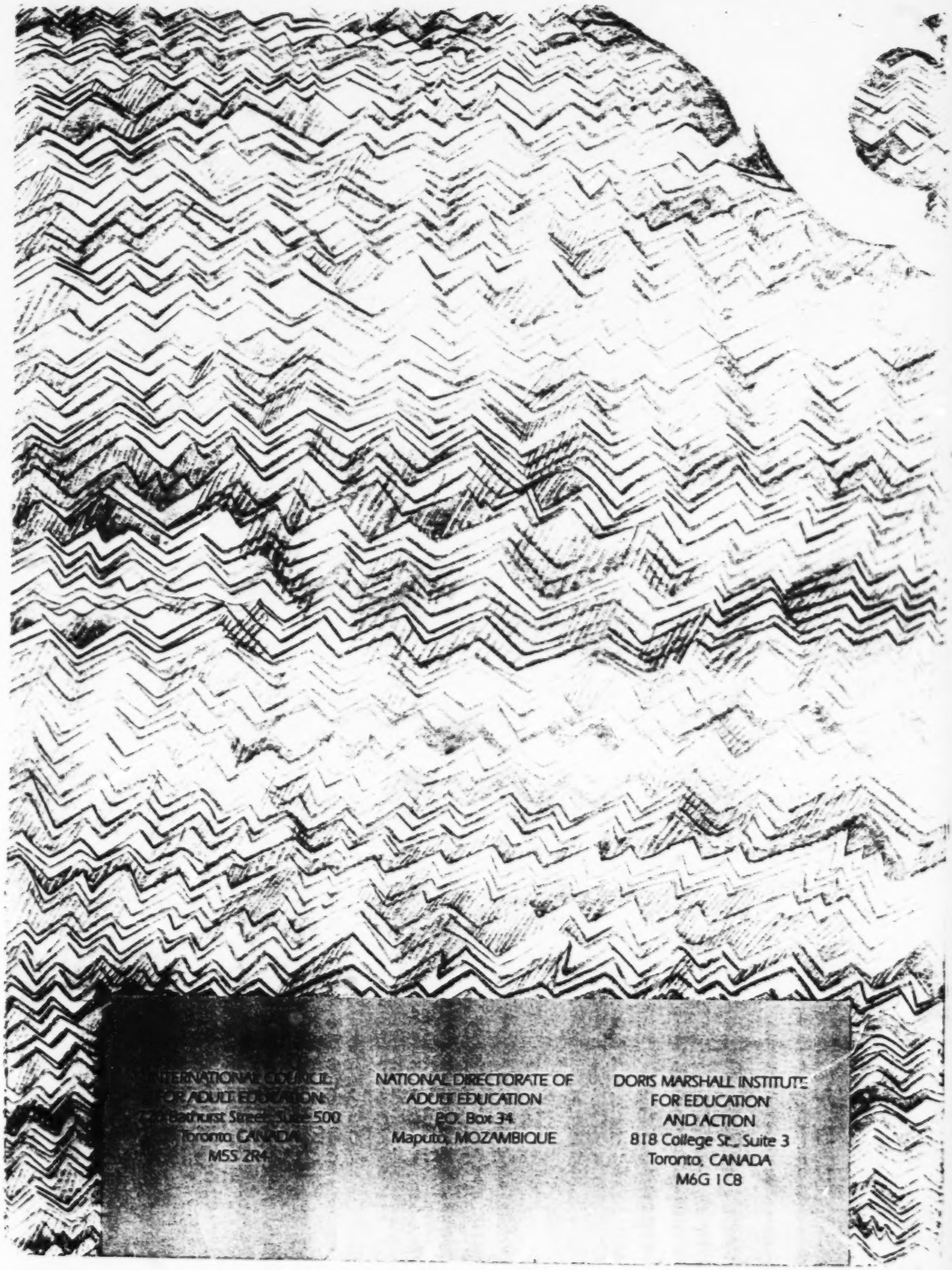
Steps:

1. Preparing the "shower of ideas"

Define the question about which you are brainstorming to the participants. (e.g., What can education contribute to development?) Ask them to write their responses on pieces of paper and fold them in half. After all have had a chance to write their ideas, collect the bits of paper.

2. Writing up the replies

Ask several participants to start reading out the replies and writing up the answers on the blackboard. Do not begin to evaluate them and analyze their feasibility, cost, etc. until after all the ideas have been put up.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